UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ORDAINING WOMEN IN MINISTRY: AN AFROCENTRIC BIBLICAL HERMENEUTIC TRAINING MODEL FOR LAY PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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BY
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INTRODUCTION

The primary goal of this model is to educate African-American lay people of the United Church of Christ on the propriety of ordaining women through an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic. I am using Dr. Clarice Martin and Dr. William Myers' working definition of Afrocentric biblical hermeneutics as follows:

People of African descent engaging in critical biblical interpretation such that:

1. Scripture is used critically and proactively to achieve an anticipatory interventionist praxis for liberation and empowerment of black peoples.

2. Afrocentric biblical interpreters maintaining a healthy "hermeneutics of suspicion" in the interrogation of biblical texts (i.e., guarding against an uncritical biblical literalism, and taking seriously the patriarchal and Androcentric character of the biblical world and biblical texts).

3. Afrocentric biblical interpreters utilize a wide array of significant, relevant, and critically responsible Afrocentric sources in the pursuit of a liberationist hermeneutic for both men and women.

The objective is for African-American lay people to

abandon the traditional and oppressive interpretation of males only as pastors and spiritual leaders in the local church. The goal is to provide a historic theological paradigm which will enable African-American lay people to understand that sexism is as equal a sin as racism and accept the responsibility to empower women in ministry in the local church, which is one of the most sexist communities.

Chapter One is entitled "Historical Overview: The General Problem of the Ordination of Women." This chapter examines the historical biblical interpretations that have prevented the ordination of women. It uses Paul K. Jewett's premises in his book The Ordination of Women, that suggest that there are three reasons why women are denied the right of ordination: 1) the nature of women, 2) the nature of the ministerial office, and 3) the nature of God. These three assumptions look at the historical objection to women's ordination and connect the arguments to the modern day issues for those who oppose women's ordination. Historically women have been denied ordination rights because society has marked them as inferior. Currently, women are still faced with the same dilemma, considered less than men. Highlighted also in this chapter is the history of the ordination of women in the United Church of Christ and the story of African-American female clergy in the United Church of Christ. Although the United Church in its very origin has

maintained a strong advocacy for women in ordained ministry, it has brought "historical baggage" with it. Despite the fact that the United Church of Christ is one of the most liberal and affirming denominations in the United States, there are many more conservatives at the local church level. Even though the constitution of the UCC affirms leadership in the church from both males and females, there are very few African-American women in leadership positions within the 6,338 United Church of Christ congregations.

Chapter Two, "Biblical and Exegetical Foundations for Women's Ordination," explores the biblical text of Galatians 3:23-29. This text is used to show how the Bible encourages the liberation of all people. Historically, the text has been used for racial inclusion by African-American male preachers, who used it to combat the oppressive interpretation of Eurocentric thought which viewed whites as superior. Since this text has been applied as a liberating point of reference by African-American male preachers from white racist thought, we apply it to eradicate sexist thoughts that dominate the minds of lay people in the local churches. Thus Galatians 3:23-29 is used to give a biblical perspective that authenticates freedom for all races, sexes, and classes. In this case we use the text to authenticate the freedom of sexes in the local churches. Chapter Two concludes with different interpretations of Galatians from various perspectives, including the womanist view.

Chapter Three "Theological Perspectives on the Ordination of Women," reveals how important it is to develop an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic to eliminate the male only conception of pastoral leadership in the local church. Although there are many lay people who believe that God can use anyone, there are also many African-American lay people that seem to believe that God does not use women to do pastoral ministry in the local church. In this chapter womanist theologians, along with other theologians, emphasize how African-American women have experienced the insensitive response of Black churches to sexism.

Chapter Four, "Design and Implementation of Model of Ministry," reveals the practical implementation of the model of ministry educating African-American lay people. It also tells where the training module took place in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Chapter Five, "Assessment and Evaluation of the Model," reveals the results of the model of ministry. This chapter displays the statistical data about the test group and evaluates the effectiveness of the module.

Chapter Six, "Summary and Conclusions," summarizes the results of the study and learnings.

ABSTRACT

ORDAINING WOMEN IN MINISTRY: AN
AFROCENTRIC BIBLICAL HERMENEUTIC TRAINING MODEL
FOR LAY PEOPLE IN THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE
IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

by

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United Theological Seminary, 1996

Mentors

Dr. William Myers and Dr. Clarice Martin

The focus of this project was to develop an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic to educate African-American lay people of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ on the propriety of ordaining women. A pre-test was administered to 25 lay people to measure their knowledge, attitudes, and actions. The process continued by lay people being exposed to four Afrocentric training workshops, after which they were subjected to a post-test. The results of the data reveal that knowledge, attitudes, and actions of lay people can be changed and were changed. Therefore, a project like this can be a helpful tool for educating lay people on sexism in the local church and at the same time bring healing to women in ordained ministry.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

The ordination of women has been a major topic of discussion for centuries and is one of the hottest topics of denominations today. Many arguments have been used to keep women from the ritual of ordination, but the most overriding of them all is that women are by nature inferior to men. Paul K. Jewett, in his book The Ordination of Women, suggests that there are three arguments denominations or church history have used to deny ordination to women: 1) the nature of woman, 2) the nature of the ministerial office, and 3) the nature of God.[1]

According to Jewett, the nature of women was defined by the early church fathers as "the devil's gateway." For the early church fathers, woman was "*per definitionem*, was the 'weaker vessel,' 'slow of understanding,' 'unstable in mind,' 'liable to deception,' the one whose disobedience had ruined the man, the image and glory of God, and required the death of the Son of God."[2]

Jewett says many of the ancient fathers were aided

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[1]Paul K. Jewett, The Ordination of Women (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), ix.

[2]Ibid., 5.

and abetted in this deep suspicion of the female by their view of human sexuality. "Reacting to the pervasive license of their day and in some instances, lamenting the powers of lust in their own lives before conversion, they embraced a rigorous asceticism which inevitably distorted their perception."[3]

They assumed that theirs was an androcentric culture and that in all things men were born to lead, women to obey. They compared the nature of a woman to the nature of a snake, both subtle and dangerous.[4]

During the Middle Ages the educated men assumed the superiority of the man over the woman. Even in procreation the woman was seen as a mere recipient whose role was passive submission.[5]

To support his argument on "the nature of women," Jewitt uses Mascall, a prominent theological spokesman for High-Church Anglicanism. Mascall refers to N.P. Williams' "imposing argument" against women's ordination. Williams argues that "well known, though mysterious, affinity between religious emotion and sex-emotion" in virtue of which "the simulation of the religious instinct may, by a kind of subconscious reverberation, under certain circumstances, simultaneously stimulate that per se less supernatural

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[3]Ibid., 5-6.

[4]Ibid., 6.

[5]Ibid., 6.

instinct which is so closely allied to it."[6]

Williams argues that men are less likely to distract women in worship. He says that women are more likely to distract men in worship. Therefore, women should not be ordained because of their sexual nature and emotions, which is a permanent fact that cannot be changed.

Jewett notes that the second argument that prevents women from being ordained is the nature of the ministerial office. The complaint that man, with God's supposed blessing, holds the ecclesiastical power of guardianship over the woman, brings us directly to the matter of ordination.[7]

Jewett says that whenever the question of ordination of women comes up, the tradition is to deal with the rights of women to the office. This matter must be put on the table for discussion. He says ordination constitutes, among other things, the church's confirmation of this divine call; and thus it certifies, as it were, one's right to serve as a minister of Jesus Christ.

Ordination presupposes that there is a theological dimension to one's entry into the Christian ministry: one is "called" of God to the office, one does not simply choose to be a minister as one would choose to enter a profession.[8]

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[6]Ibid., 7.

[7]Ibid., 13.

[8]Ibid., 14.

This is the issue for the church historically and today: does God call women? Is it the same call that men receive to be ministers in the church? Jewett uses C.S. Lewis to highlight this point. Lewis says that women can be used as a resource for the church but ordination is a right for men. He says that the husband is the head of the wife like Christ is the head of the church. Therefore, the authority to minister in Christ's name should be given to the one whom God has appointed to function at the natural level as husband, "head," of the family. Lewis says that God had already decided who should minister and we should not tamper with God's divine plan. We should remember that ordination is sacred and it was not intended for women; God has given women another vocation:[9]

> God created man and woman to have different functions and the function of the male, which includes protection and guardianship of the family and home, is symbolized in the office of the priest who guards the temple and offers sacrifice.[10]

Jewett summarizes St. Thomas' position on the issue of the nature of the ministerial office. He says St. Thomas states this impossibility in terms of a deficiency which the woman suffers in spiritual receptivity and power, a rather shocking thesis to a modern reader. St. Thomas cites female sexuality as impediment number one, to receiving the sacrament of ordination, followed by such impediments, when found

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[9]Ibid., 15.

[10]Ibid., 16.

in the male, as defectiveness of reason, a state of servitude, the guilt of homicide, the stigma of illegitimacy, and the condition of physical mutilation.[11] St. Thomas supported the inferiority of women, concluding that the "role of sexes rests upon an ontological hierarchy of worth and endowment."[12]

St. Thomas' argument brings us back to the initial argument and the modern day issue for those who oppose the ordination of women: the belief that women are inferior, the exclusion of women from the rights of ordination because they are viewed to function in an inferior role. Men are the head and women are to follow the leader:

> Roman Catholics and Anglicans who oppose the ordination of women are following the tradition of the centuries in saying woman, per definition, is incapable of receiving priestly or Episcopal "character." Yet they insist that such incapacity implies no inferiority, as assumed in other ages. What God has made woman to be, and what he intends for her to do, simply mark her as other than the man.[13]

Jewett's third argument is that the masculinity of God entails a male order of ministry in the church:

> It is in no way derogatory to the female sex to point out that the Christian priest is to exercise fatherhood and not motherhood to God's family because his office is a participation in God's own relationship to his people and God is our father in heaven and not our mother. The female sex has its own peculiar dignity as we shall see in a moment, but we can hardly imagine it exercising the fatherhood of God. And that God is the father of his people is one of the dominant themes

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[11]Ibid., 17

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

of the Old and New Testaments alike.[14]

Jewett summarizes his sayings by using the phrase, "we can hardly imagine the female sex exercising the fatherhood of God." Jewett says that the masculine pronoun touches the crux of the matter. He argues that ordained ministers stand in God's place, and traditionally to stand in God's place was to stand in a masculine place. Therefore, only man can stand in God's place."[15]

St. Thomas rejected female ordinations because he argues it was impossible to have ordination without a male person. He gives the same reason against women's ordination that Luther, Calvin, and many others use today. Thomas concludes that the female sex is unable to receive Holy Orders because the scriptures teach against it.[16] He argues that the scripture does not support women's ordination.

Jewett discusses the incarnation, the male apostolate, and God in the male imagery of the scripture to further explain the argument of the masculinity of God. This argument is in no way distant from women's ordination today. We are still questioning why the Bible speaks of God in the male gender.

Concluding Jewett's explanation for the opposition of women's ordination, there is still the overriding factor

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[14]Ibid., 28.

[15]Ibid., 29.

[16]Ibid., 19.

among all three arguments of whether or not male is better than female. The nature of woman, the nature of the ministerial office, and the nature of God all bring to focus the inferiority of women historically and in this modern time. Women are still perceived to be less than men.

Willard Swartley, in his book Slavery, Sabbath, War, and Women, suggests that women are described in cultural depictions as having a nature that is inferior to men. The illustrations have been widely believed and constitutionnalized in most of the world.[17] Women in most cultures are still being treated as inferior to men.

The belief in the ideology of the inferiority of women and the superiority of men was not limited to the Greek society alone; many of the male-oriented cultures were influenced by it:[18]

> The impact of ancient culture went beyond defining woman as man's biological, intellectual, and social inferior. It also shaped the male perception of woman as a spiritual being. The Hebrews had no divine command in the Old Testament to instruct girls or women.[19]

Women and girls were not taught the Torah; only men and boys were taught. The oral law in Jesus' day firmly declared "let the words of the law be burned rather than committed to women. If a man teaches his daughter the law,

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[17]Willard M. Swartley, Slavery, Sabbath, War, and Women: Case Issues in Biblical Interpretation (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald, 1983), 169.

[18]Ibid., 71.

[19]Ibid., 82.

it is as though he taught her lewdness."[20]

Schmidt admits that the spiritual inferiority argument, when applied to women by some prominent Christian teachers of theology, at times reflects unsound logic. Cultures have been shaped by a sexist theology and continue to be shaped by this same ideology through many theologians today.

The most Reverend David M. Maloney, in his book The Church Cannot Ordain Women to the Priesthood does not argue the inferiority of women.[21] He concludes that the church cannot ordain women to be priests because Christ has not given that norm. The fact that Jesus called twelve men to head the kingdom is a set norm that the church cannot change. Maloney emphasizes the interpretation of the custom of Christ, because Christ called all male disciples and apostles and bound the tradition of male-only ordination.[22]

Maloney says to address the issue of ordination of women, we must first clear the understanding of what hinders women's ordination. Briefly he cites that the source of women's exclusion from church leadership is simply one fact that both Judaism and Christianity existed within a patriarchal society--a society which rigidly excluded women from

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[20]Ibid., 83.

[21]David M. Maloney, The Church Cannot Ordain Women to the Priesthood (Chicago, Illinois: Franciscan Herald, 1978), 31.

[22]Ibid.

public professional life and justified this through an ideology of woman's genetic inferiority. He says the voices that tell women to be silent in the church, and to be saved by bearing children, are simply the reflection in the religious assembly of this patriarchal social system:

> Doctrine itself becomes a sanction and statements that make women's inferior and auxiliary existence appear to be the "order of God's creation," rather than being, as it is, the fallen disorder of injustice created by sinful humans.[23]

Historically women have been denied ordination rights because society has marked them as inferior. And today women are still faced with the same dilemma, considered less than men.

The History of the Ordination of Women in the United Church of Christ

The United Church of Christ (UCC) was organized in 1957. It is a merger of the Congregationalist and Christian Churches with the Evangelical and Reformed Churches. At one time these two denominations were four distinct American Protestant denominations.

The Congregationalist Church was the established religious tradition of New England with historic roots in English Puritanism and religious separatism. The Christians came from an indigenous American movement which rejected all party labels and developed simple church structures suitable to American frontier life. In the 1930's the Congregationalists and Christian Churches merged, preserving important

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[23]Ibid.

Puritan and Separatist legacies in one denomination. They had a strong history of women's ministries.

The second partner in the formation of the United Church of Christ was the Evangelical and Reformed Church, also a merger of the 1930's. First, the German Reformed Church was established by colonial immigrants in Pennsylvania and North Carolina before the Revolutionary War. Theologically, they look to the Swiss Reformation and its Heidelberg Catechism, keeping alive a confessional appreciation for liturgy and early Christian theology. Second, the new wave of German immigrants spread across the Midwestern frontier, some of whom founded "Evangelical" churches. They drew upon both Lutheran and Reformed practice to nourish a practical piety with special sensitivity to the health and welfare needs of society. In the 1930's this German Evangelical Synod of the North joined with the German Reformed Church in the United States to form the Evangelical Reformed Church. They had an ecumenical vision which transcended their German ethnicity. Women played key roles in much of their outreach.

Due to the outreach of the Congregational Christian Church toward African Americans, there is a strong African heritage within the United Church of Christ. Because of the Evangelical and Reformed assistance to Hungarians we now have within the UCC a separate Hungarian Synod.

Although the United Church of Christ in its very origin has maintained a strong advocacy for women in or-

dained ministry, it has brought "historical baggage" with it. The constitution of the United Church of Christ declares that male gender is not a requirement for ordination:

> The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society. . . .
>
> . . . The United Church of Christ seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service. . . .
>
> . . . The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls certain of its members to various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required.[24]

These three statements from the constitution describe the current theology of the United Church of Christ. The constitution explains that the church commissions, licenses, and ordains in order to regularize this "authorizing" process; however, according to the UCC Manual on Ministry, every member of the church is a minister of Jesus Christ's "priesthood of all believers":

> Grounded in the Protestant Reformation, Congregational and German Reformed women were expected to be persons of faith--diligent in care of their own souls, and careful cultivators of authentic household religiosity. The story of Anne Hutchinson in the Bay Colony is used in this point. Her religious concerns were never questioned. Her leadership became a problem, however, when she became too public in her quest for religious meaning, and especially when her popularity began to challenge male

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[24]United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry: Perspectives and Procedures for Ecclesiastical Authorization of Ministry (Cleveland: Office for Church Life and Leadership, 1986), 6.

authority.[25]

Many of the women were charged with witchcraft in the early colonies because congregations sometimes had difficulty receiving the spiritual gifts of women.

A good example of authorized female ministry is found in the life of Sarah Osborn. From the 1760's until her death in 1796, Sarah led many revivals near her house in Newport, Rhode Island, although she was never ordained. Samuel Hopkins considered her an exemplary Christian and saw to it that her memoirs were published.[26]

Principles of local congregational autonomy, religious liberty, and an educated clergy, had long informed the Congregational Christian practice regarding ordination. Because of this, Antoinette L. Brown was ordained in 1853, and received a call to serve as pastor of a small congregation in South Butler, New York.[27]

Brown's ordination did not open a flood gate for women to be ordained: After 35 years (1889), there were only four ordained women in the Congregational Church. By 1899 the number had risen to 49, with 89 in 1910, and 109 in 1920.[28] In 1930 there were 131 ordained clergywomen out of

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[25]Barbara Brown Zikmund, "Women's Ministries Within the United Church of Christ, (Cleveland, Ohio: Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society of The United Church of Christ, 1994), 4 photocopied.

[26]Ibid., 5.

[27]Ibid., 14-15.

[28]Ibid., 15.

5,609 Congregational ministers, or 2.2%. As the Congregationalists approached their 1931 merger with Christians, the 1930 yearbook also reported that there were 45 women among the 917 Christian clergy--few in number, but a higher percentage. In 1940, the number of Congregational-Christian clergywomen increased to 184, 3.1% of clergy in the new denomination. These numbers may have been higher, but some of the clergy and churches did not join in the merged denomination. By 1950 there was only a modest increase in the number of ordained women: 207 out of nearly 6,000 clergy.[29]

The first ordained Evangelical and Reformed clergywoman was Beatrice M. Weaver (McConnell). She was a graduate of Ursinus College who attended Lancaster Theological Seminary. In the late 1940's, she learned about a special scholarship for Ursinus graduates awarded by St. Paul's Evangelical and Reformed Church in Lancaster. She was not only the first woman to be ordained, in 1948, but she was also the first female to be ordained pastor by her denomination. She was the first woman to graduate from Lancaster Theological Seminary with a B.D. degree.[30] By 1951, the Evangelical and Reformed Church had ordained four women.

The concern for clergywomen within the Congregational Christian Churches and in the Evangelical and Reformed Church in the early 1950's focused upon the individual

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[29]Ibid., 16.

[30]Ibid., 17.

ministries of particular women and the general need for more clergy in the churches. Few people objected to women serving as clergy in the two denominations, but is was assumed that their numbers would remain small.[31]

In the early 1970's the feminist movement gained momentum and the UCC became aware of sexism in the structure of the church. Consequently, a task force on women in the church and society was appointed by the Executive Council of the church. In June of 1987 this task force became an instrumentality of the United Church of Christ. The new instrumentality was named "The Coordinating Center initiated United Church of Christ, Women in Mission" (UCCWM).

In order to learn more about the placement situation of clergywomen, in February of 1990 a consultation was held with placement officers, local church pastors, network representatives, persons from the Office for Church Life and Leadership (OCLL), and the research staff from the United Church of Christ Board for Homeland Ministries (UCCBHM). The following information was uncovered:

> 18% of all clergy in the United Church of Christ in 1990 were clergywomen. This represents a 100% increase in the past 10 years (90% of clergy in 1980 were clergymen).[32] While 18% of clergy are clergywomen, only 13% of Senior or Solo pastors are women.[33] Women represent 52% of associate pastors or ordained Christian education staff, 25% of clergy serving non-UCC churches, 30% of clergy in counseling or health

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[31]Ibid., 17.

[32]Ibid., 24.

[33]Ibid., 24.

> care ministries, 29% of chaplains or missionaries, 16% of those in conference or denominational work, 25% of those who are unclassified or are on leave of absence, and 40% of retired clergy.[34]

The UCC has a growing number of women in ordained ministry. It has been and is being blessed by their ministries. Yet preliminary results from 50 placement officers showed that there is still an unreadiness of churches to accept women clergy: "For example, 85% of placement officers said that geographic limitations were a problem and 57% said that being part of a clergy couple or other family circumstance had been substantial barriers to the placement of women."[35]

The Story of African-American Female Clergy in the United Church of Christ

Among the 6,338 congregations within the UCC, there are 288 African-American Churches (AAC). Almost 75% of the 288 congregations descend from the Congregational Christian wing of the UCC. The other 25% are transitional churches, emerging out of the Reformed and Evangelical Churches. Because of transitional neighborhoods (white flight), African-American pastors were called to the transitional churches. Almost fifty percent (134 churches) of African-American Churches (AAC) are located in the Southern Conference of the UCC.

Despite the fact that the United Church of Christ is

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[34]Ibid., 24.

[35]Ibid., 24-25.

one of the most liberal and affirming denominations in the United States, there are many more conservatives at the local church level. Even though the constitution of the UCC affirms leadership in the church from both males and females, there are very few African-American women in leadership positions within the 6,338 UCC congregations.

To be specific, there are 288 African-American churches, but only eight full-time African-American female pastors. Other ministers include four part-time pastors and about ten part-time Associate pastors. Most of the women do not have full ministerial standing within the UCC. Ministers without full standing cannot participate in the Pension Fund of the UCC.

Before the merger of the four bodies into the United Church of Christ, four African-American females were ordained by the Congregational Christian Church. After the merger into the United Church of Christ, it took another sixteen years before another African-American female was ordained.

In 1974, Dr. Yvonne Delk was the first African-American female to be ordained under the new name "United Church of Christ." As women in the ministry, we have collectively shared our experiences, and struggles within United Church of Christ. Recalling a conversation with Yvonne Delk, I remember her talking about her struggle to achieve her present status. Wrestling with the animosity of society and her call to preach from God, she serves as an example to

African-American female clergy all over the world. Delk recalls graduating from a white male seminary, where the principle idea taught was that women should only be in Christian Education. The sexism did not end with seminary, but continued throughout her life.

When it was time for her to be ordained, in the Eastern Virginia Association of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ, she lacked a call from a local church. Later, she learned that the Association had ordained a male seminary president, and thus her work as a Christian educator could qualify as a call.

One of the lowest experiences that Delk faced occurred when she was informed that one of the churches in Norfolk, Virginia was in need of a minister. She telephoned the search committee about the position, but in return was told not to apply. She could not understand why she was denied this position, since this was the same community which had previously urged her to follow after God's will.

Since Delk's ordination in 1974, over fifty African-American females have been ordained.

Statistics from The Office of the Secretary of The United Church of Christ show that the majority of African-American women are without placement in our church.

African-American Women in Ministry
within the United Church of Christ

	ORDAINED	LICENSED	IN-CARE	NO-STATUS OR DROPPED
Pastor	12			
Associate Pastor		8	4	
Seminarians			23	
Chaplains	9			
Displaced Women				25
Conference	1			
Association	0			
National Office	4			
Global	4			

There are over 300 African-American males with full standing within the UCC. Out of the 288 churches, there are 238 filled pulpits. About 226 are filled by African-American males. At the present time there are about 50 congregations in the search process for a pastor. Many of the congregations in search will not consider a female.

The latest poll from the Office of the Secretary of the United Church of Christ states that there are 10,208 clergy persons within the UCC: 1,899 are female clergy, 328 are African-American, and 67 of them are African-American females.

In the first seven months of 1994, three African-American female clergy have been called as Senior Pastor of a local church. The United Church of Christ has made an effort to include African-American female clergy, but still needs to do more. Within the local church setting, almost 75% of African-American churches will not consider a female as Senior

Pastor. Females remain the number one candidates for "911" churches, churches that are unable to attract male candidates because the pay is too low.[36]

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[36]Bernice Powell Jackson of Cleveland, interviewed by author, 18 October 1993, transcript, Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, Cleveland, Ohio.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND EXEGETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR WOMEN'S ORDINATION

Introduction

Nearly two thousand years after the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the declaration of spiritual freedom by Paul's letter to the Galatians, the African-American Church is still struggling with the issue of leadership roles for women in the life of the church. Many African-American churches fail to make sexism a liberation issue for the church, but they are very clear that Christ has freed African-Americans from the bondage of slavery by the white dominant race. Many African-American churches are prepared to combat racism no matter where it rears its ugly head, but sexism has not been adequately addressed.

With this thought in mind, we turn to Paul's letter for further insight on the subject. Galatians 3:23-29 was selected because it has exercised profound influence on African-American churches in the struggle for freedom. Many freedom fighters have lifted up this text as a litany of freedom, but it also contains the strongest statement of equality of females and roles to be found in the New Testa-

ment.[37]

GALATIANS 3:23-29: AN APPEAL TO BAPTISMAL (26-29) EQUALITY

> 23. Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. 27 As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.[38]

The Galatians letter is addressed to the Christian congregation of Galatia (1:2b). The exact location of the Galatia Church is disputed by biblical scholars because Paul uses the term "Galatia" which had two meanings:

> (a) In its ethnographical sense, it denoted the old Galatic region in the central plateau of Asia minor originally inhabited by the Gauls, that is, North Galatia; (b) as a political division, it referred to the whole of the Roman province called Galatia, which also included the region to the south in some of the cities of which - Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe - Paul had founded churches during his first missionary journey (Acts 13:13-14:28).[39]

F. F. Bruce notes that the dispute of the Galatians location is called the" North Galatian hypothesis" and the

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[37]Charles B. Cousar, Galatians, Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, (Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox, 1982), 3.

[38]All scriptures are quoted from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

[39]Ronald Y. K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 1.

"South Galatian hypothesis."[40] Bruce explains that the "North Galatians" hypothesis was unchallenged until the eighteenth century, and he supports the "South Galatian" hypothesis.

Ragner Bring concludes that "for an understanding of the actual content of the letter it is relatively unimportant whether we accept one or the other of these theories."[41] Bring says "that it seems that The South Galatian Theory, although it was generally accepted for many years, is now being abandoned by many scholars."[42]

These theories have a direct bearing on the date of the letter. The "South Galatian" theory would claim an earlier date than the "North Galatian" theory. The letter could have been written as early as A.D. 48 or as late as A.D. 56 during the third missionary journey of Paul.

The occasion of the letter was to defend the gospel of Jesus Christ from the legalistic perversion of the Judaizers. After the conversion of the Galatians, Judaizers infiltrated the young congregation. They seem to be Jewish Christians from Jerusalem representing the circumcision party within that church, and claiming the support of James.

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[40]F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians. A Commentary on the Greek Text. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1982), 8.

[41]Ragner Bring, Commentary on Galatians, (Philadelphia: Mutt Lenberg, 1961), 5.

[42]Ibid.

They argued that the ceremonial laws were still in force and challenged Paul's renegade tendencies in preaching a radical message of freedom.

Paul refers to the Jewish Christians as "trouble-makers" or "Agitators," because they tried to impose their rituals and beliefs upon the Gentile Christians. Paul rejects and puts down their wrong teachings and reminds the Gentiles of the first message of salvation.[43]

Paul's introduction to the church of Galatia was marked by the preaching of Christ and the response of faith. Paul's stress on grace led him to face two questions: Who constitutes the people of God? (i.e., who are the true children of Abraham), and what is the function of the law?[44]

The issue of whether the Gentiles have to become Jews in order to be full-pledged Christians can be answered. Paul says "No." The very nature of grace eliminates special categories.

The Genre of Galatians

Fung uses Betz's argument that Galatians belongs to the "apologetic letter" genre and conforms to the principle

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[43]Hans Dieter Betz, Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 19.

[44]Cousar, 7.

rules of contemporary rhetoric.[45] Fung defines an "apologetic letter" as one that:

> Presupposes the real or fictitious situation of the court of law, with jury, accuser and defendant. In the case of Galatians, the addresses are identical with the jury, with Paul being the defendant and his opponents the accusers. This situation makes Paul's Galatian letter self-Apology, delivered not in person but in written form.[46]

Fung uses Meeks' arguments to shed light on Betz's theory. Meeks concludes that Betz's argument is not logically clear. Betz does not prove that the last four chapters "must be conceived primarily as defensive."[47] Fung agrees with C. K. Burnett's "dictum" that Betz has made too much of the "'apologetic letter' genre."[48]

Bring describes the character of the Galatians letter as a heated discussion on faith and the law. He states that "Both the introduction and the conclusion of the letter are characterized by Paul's zeal in presenting his message and defending its truth."[49] After hearing the debates about the genre of Galatians I prefer Fung's view that we should choose more traditional ways to analyze the letter.[50]

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[45]Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 29.

[46]Ibid., 29.

[47]Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 32.

[48]Ibid., 33.

[49]Bring, Commentary on Galatians, 8.

[50]Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 32.

The Commentary

Verses 23-25 are important in relationship to verses 26-29 in that they declare liberation from the law. It is in these verses that Paul gives the reason why Gentiles do not have to keep the Jewish laws or rituals to remain Christians.

Verse 23. Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed.

Paul said we were guarded under the law until faith came to release us from it. The verse implies that faith did not exist before Christ came; however, it is also evident that Abraham, among others, exhibited faith.[51]

Betz suggests that verse 23 is a marking of two mythical historical periods. The period of the law ending and the period of faith beginning.[52]

The period of the law is a period under sin. This is not because the law and sin are identical, but because the law, while forbidding sin, stimulates the very thing that it forbids. However, after Christ came we are no longer under the period of the law, but the period of faith. "But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith."[53]

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[51]Bring, Commentary in Galatians.

[52]Betz, Galatians, 175.

[53]Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 181.

Hong focuses on the pedagogue, boy leader, schoolmaster, and guard until Christ comes. He says the "we" refers to the Jews who the law was given to.[54]

Fung views the "we" as prisoners in the custody of the law. The "we" does not only refer to the Jews but to Gentiles alike who were closely guarded and locked under the law; "even though the Gentiles did not possess the law in the same form that the Jews did."[55]

Ebeling suggests that we should see Paul's theme of the "law" from another perspective than that of ordinary legislation:[56]

> His question about the function of the law is not juristic but theological. Of course, the latter does not exclude the former. Of course, Paul would never deny that in civil usage the law serves to specify and prohibit transgression (Rom 13: 1-7). Even though it cannot prevent them, at least it can limit them. The evil in the world is not fundamentally lessened, but the obvious damage it causes is reduced as much as possible. Paul is neither an antinomian nor an anarchist. He could not approve to the law of inheritance if he thought nothing of civil law.[57]

Verse 24. "Therefore the law was disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith."

Verse 24 is connected with the same issue of whether

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[54]In-Kyu Hong, "The Law in Galatians," Journal for the Study of the New Testament, Supplement Series 81, (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic, 1993), 46.

[55]Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 167.

[56]Gerhard Ebeling, The Truth of the Gospel and Exposition of Galatians, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 193.

[57]Ibid., 194.

or not faith existed before the justification of Christ. The word translated as "disciplinarian" can also be "custodian" or "tutor," or literally "boy-leader." There is no single word in English which translates adequately the Greek "pedagogues" (Phillips, "a strict governess in charge of us.")[58]

Bring, in his commentary on Verse 24, says that the connection between Moses and Christ, or between the law and faith, becomes in this context both temporal and final. Moses and the law kept them under restraint until faith should be revealed.[59] Betz explains verse 24 as Paul's conclusion and final answer to the question about the Torah. "The figure of the pedagogue is looked upon as a hard but necessary instrument in bringing a person to achieve and realize virtue."[60]

The pedagogue was the personal slave attendant who accompanied the free-born boy whenever he went, from the time he left his nurse's care. It was his duty to teach the boy good manners and take him to school. The pedagogue would wait for the boy in a room reserved specifically for that purpose, or even in the classroom.[61]

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[58]John William, 2 Corinthians - Philemon, Broadman Commentary, Vol. Two, (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman, 1971), 103.

[59]Bring, Commentary on Galatians, 177.

[60]Betz, Galatians, 177.

[61]Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 182.

Fung says that Paul's primary concern in these verses (22-25) is not to describe the genesis of individual faith in terms of psychological development, but to sketch the progress of salvation history:[62]

> When, in elaboration of the phrase "until Christ," Paul describes the meaning and goal of the laws activity as custodian by the clause "that we might be justified by faith."[63]

Verse 25. "But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian." The word "disciplinarian" appears again. We are no longer subject to a "disciplinarian." There is an inner-connection between the law and Christ.

Fung says that it is "the historic succession of one period of revelation upon another and the displacement of the law by Christ" from the vantage point of salvation history. The validity of the law ceased with the coming of faith in the coming of Christ.[64]

Bruce proclaims verse 25 as a new order of liberated existence in Christ. He adds that this is Paul's great affirmation of the new dispensation.[65] Betz says for Christians verse 25 implies that the law does not apply anymore.[66]

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[62]Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 169.

[63]Ibid., 170.

[64]Ibid.

[65]Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 183.

[66]Betz, Galatians, 169.

Verses 23-25 summarize the reason why the Gentile Christians should not be persuaded by the Jewish Christians to follow the ritual of the law. These verses lay the foundation for the change in humankind's relations with God. Some of the Jews wanted to hold onto the familiar, what came natural to them. For the new Christians, the law was not the guard because Christ had already come.

In the African-American community there are those who want to continue in the past because it's natural and comfortable. As a people we remain committed to those old church covenants that exclude the majority of its membership, and those old constitutions and covenants that shape the churches with an all male concept of leadership. The African-American churches should develop a new covenant that will include all people in the community of faith. Yet there are clergy and lay people in the African-American Church, who like the Judaizers, continue to teach and enforce the old constitution. They believe in and support "male leadership only" in the church. They cannot see the ritual of women being in leadership of the holy place. They continue to emphasize that males possess the presence and power from God to lead worship. However, Galatians 3:23-25 says that we are no longer under the old guard; there is a new era whereby faith allows all of us to inherit the ability to become God's leaders. The restriction sign of ritually clean Jews is over and the sign of whosoever believes is

the replacement.

We are no longer under the law of restriction but by our faith we are released and free to be the people of God, whether we are Jews or Gentiles under guard of the law. There are many that believe the curse of the law is the absence of self-determination and subordination. The law is subjected to the flesh, but faith through Christ is subject to the spirit. Therefore Christ is the beginning of our freedom from the law of the flesh. We are now free to experience faith without the guard of the law. We are delivered from the rituals of the old ways and able to walk in a new relationship with God.

When the African-American Church realizes that verses 22-25 set the tone for a new order for God's people, then we will be able to understand verses 26-29 clearer.

Unity In Christ--Galatians 3:26-29

> 26. For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith.
> 27. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
> 28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one
> 29. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

This section of Galatians has already been interpreted to some degree because of the previous textual analysis of verses 23-25.

Ebeling suggests that Paul's argument in verses 26-29 parallels with the proceeding text since, "the reference to the epoch in sacred history that distinguishes being under

the law from being under Christ" is the liberation theme at issue in both set of verses.[67]

Ebeling zeros in on sonship and servant relationships. He discusses in depth the theme "sons" (Son of God). He focuses attention on Paul's call to the Gentiles to have all rights and privileges as the Jews received in their covenant with God. Therefore the new relationship adopts the Gentiles as children of God and Abraham's seed. The Gentiles who put on Christ have put off their own selves. They are released and set free from themselves.[68]

Ebeling says we must be careful of our definition of "uniformity" because there are some differences that we must recognize that are preexisting naturally and cannot be eliminated.[69]

I agree with Ebeling, "putting on Christ" will not take away our natural differences (race, sex, class, and creed), but if we are changed by the power of Christ we should at least be able to live in peace with our differences. Ebeling seems to suggest that no matter how much Christ we have on, there will never be a place of utopia here on earth. He says people are always searching for universal peace, equality, and justice but it can be a goal that is

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[67]Ebeling, The Truth of the Gospel, 207.

[68]Ibid., 212-213.

[69]Ibid., 213.

highly contradictory:[70]

Bring says that faith gives everyone an equal share in the inheritance. He explains that the sonship is not established through circumcision precedence before God, but those who have faith and are committed to the unity in Christ can be seen as the one crucified and resurrected with Christ.[71]

> The Christian faith is characterized by baptism, just as the law, understood in the Jewish sense, is characterized by circumcision. All Christians were baptized, while circumcision could apply only to males.[72]

Bring says Paul's message of baptism into Christ means putting on Christ. He uses the verb endo, "to put on." This also means "to cover oneself with," "to penetrate," "to submerge oneself in," "to dive into."[73]

The person becomes one with Christ and self:

> The pivot of Paul's entire argument in Galatians is his understanding of the cross of Christ as the event of the eschatological redemption. In achieving this redemption there are two logical (not temporal!) steps. First, by becoming a curse for Israel, Christ redeemed Israel from the curse of the law, then, the redemption was at the same time and on equal terms extended to the Gentiles, because Israel represented all nations. Actually the humiliating incarnation. Suffering and death of Christ was for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. Indeed he is the substitute and representative of all humankind![74]

Hong says there are areas of inconsistency which

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[70]Ibid., 214.

[71]Bring, Commentary on Galatians, 180.

[72]Ibid., 180.

[73]Ibid., 181.

[74]Hong, The Law in Galatians, 95-96.

Räisänen perceives such as: the concept of the law oscillates between the Jewish Torah, universal enforced slavery for Gentiles as well as Jews, moral and ritual, abolition of the law yet validity, to name a few.[75]

Fung in his commentary on verses 26-29 says that we have all been released from the law by faith and all Christians are included in the "you...all," no matter the race, sex or social status.[76]

He explains verse 27 as the initiation service into Christ. The "you...all" unites Christian with Christ by baptism into Christ to become a member of a new humanity. This baptism means that Christians put on Christ as their new garment. The changing of clothes represent an inward spiritual change.[77]

In verse 28, Fung says:

> The three antitheses, which represent the most far-reaching distinctions of ancient society, seem to have been deliberately chosen with an eye to the threefold privilege for which a pious male Jew daily thanked God: that he was not made a Gentile, a slave or, a woman. Categories of people debarred from certain religious privileges.[78]

Fung emphasizes the importance of the "male and female" in this text. He says that the "no male and female" did not mean that God has restored humankind to the "Pri-

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[75]Ibid., 195.

[76]Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 168.

[77]Ibid., 172.

[78]Ibid., 175.

stire androgynous state," nor does it mean that all male-female distinctions have been obliterated in Christ, anymore than that there is no racial difference between the Christian Jew and the Christian Gentile.[79]

"In Christ Jesus" emphasizes that Paul views the elimination of these antitheses from the standpoint of redemption in Christ. Fung says verse 28 emphasizes unity rather than on equality, if equality is incorporated into this "one person" it is only secondary.[80] This new relation with Christ allows "you...all" to now participate in the promise because Christ is the son of Abraham and an heir to God's promise.

In disagreement with Fung, we must not only use verse 28, which calls for unity in the church and society, but we must use this verse as an opportunity to call for equality among races, sexes, and classes. As we search for freedom from all forms of bondage, verse 28 recognizes our differences, yet, tells us in Christ it does not matter whether we are White or Black, male or female, middle class or lower class, we are still equal (on the same level) in the eyes of Christ.

How can one achieve unity if equality is absent? Is Christ divided? Can we participate as the body of Christ if there is no equality? If we follow after Christ's examples,

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[79]Ibid., 175.

[80]Ibid., 176.

we should see the worth of all humankind, not looking down or up to people, but looking to each other face to face.

Galatians 3:28 is the validation for Black women in ministry who suffer daily from inequality in church and society. The Bible is the major source of "religious validation for the lives of African American women."[81]

Betz says the "for you are all" in Galatians 3:26-28 addresses groups of people in the second person plural, defining their religious status before God. He relates this verse to the beatitudes ("Macarism").[82] He says that the "as many of you" is not intended to limit the "all" of verse 26, but identifies what is meant by "all."[83] Included are all Christians because all are baptized.

Betz's explanation of "putting on Christ" suggests that an event of divine transformation has occurred.[84] Verse 27 outlines the legal joining of the religious community through baptism, the "official declaration of adoption." "The social changes are claimed as a part of the process of redemption and as the result of the ecstatic experiences which the Galatians as well as other Christians have had."[85] Betz says that by implication Paul eliminates

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[81]Jacquelyn Grant, White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars 1989), 11.

[82]Betz, Galatians, 183.

[83]Ibid., 186.

[84]Ibid., 187.

[85]Ibid., 190.

cultural distinctions, which gave equality between Jews and Greek; it is the emancipation of the Jews.[86] The second phrase, slave nor free, means to abolish the social institution of slavery as well as a declaration of the irrelevancy of that institution.[87] "Paul shied away from the alternative of social rebellion which no doubt would have been suppressed violently."[88]

The strangest of the three statements is found in verse 28c: "there is no male nor female." Betz says this statement does not only deal with the social differences between man and woman, but there are some ("roles") biological distinctions.[89] He calls it "*social emancipation of women*."[90] "Paul in the context of the apocryphal and gnostic parallels, 'neither male nor female' would claim the metaphysical removal of the *biological* sex distinctions as a result of the salvation in Christ. In the latter case, we must then speak not merely of social emancipation but of androgyny."[91] Betz says the stories did teach that women had the same "nature" as men. "The general abolition of the

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[86]Ibid., 191.

[87]Ibid., 193.

[88]Ibid., 195.

[89]Ibid., 195.

[90]Ibid., 196.

[91]Ibid., 196.

sexes is not found in the Greco-Roman sources."[92]

Betz discusses at length the issue of androgyny. He says there are problems with women using Galatians 3:28 to claim emancipation because of the issue of hierarchy raised in I Corinthians. He says that Paul may have retracted the Galatian position by implication of I Corinthians.[93]

Ben Witherington says that this text can be used to argue that neither social, sexual, nor ethnic differences should affect whether one can be or remain in Christ. The second thing to note is that Paul breaks the parallel structure by saying "no male or female." Witherington says that this could have reference to Gen. 1:27 ("male and female he created them"). He suggests two social implications for women in Christ. "First, it implies that sexual, social, and ethnic distinctions cannot be used to determine whether one may be or remain in Christ. Secondly, it implies that such distinctions, while they still exist, should not be used to determine one's standing in Christ. Being baptized into Christ means that persons should use all of who they are to glorify God and build the body of Christ."[94]

Paul Jewett says that Galatians 3:26-28 and Genesis 1:26 are the reason he rejects the traditional view of

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[92]Ibid., 196-197.

[93]Ibid., 200.

[94]Ben Witherington III, Women in the Earliest Churches, (Cambridge, Cambridge University 1988), 178.

sexual hierarchy. He says that these scriptures indicate partnership both by the creation ordinance and the new creation in Christ, which breaks the barriers of race, class, and sex. Jewett subscribes to the view that God, women, and men are partners in life.[95]

Hierarchical Interpreters

Ryrie affirms that the Gal. 3:26-28 clearly indicates that women and men have equal spiritual privileges, but he also believes the text does not obliterate all the differences between the sexes. "To use these words to imply that there can be no subordination of women is to misunderstand Paul's meaning."[96]

Zerbst is similar to Ryrie in that he says Gal. 3:28 affirms equality of the sexes regarding life in Christ, but "it" does not annul, either in marriage or in church regulations, the differences established in creation between the sexes.[97]

Liberationist Interpreters

Richard and Joyce Boldrey regard this as a manifesto of Christian freedom, mainly from sin and law, but also from the limitations of creation, since the phrase "male and female" follows the technical formula of Genesis 1:27. The

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[95]Jewett, The Ordination of Women, 2.

[96]Swartley, Slavery Sabbath War and Women, 164.

[97]Ibid.

two terms of the pair are not joined with "nor" as are the terms of the other two pairs, but with "and," thus showing dependence upon the Genesis formula. Hence, Paul is saying that in Christ, the relationship between men and women should transcend the male-female division.[98]

Clarice Martin, in her article "The Haustafeln" ("Household Codes") in African-American Biblical Interpretation: "Free Slaves" and "Subordinate Women," says that in her view, "this inclusive community places priority on allegiance to the Christian communities and not to original ties to one's family. Women are then defined by their new allegiance to the basileia community and not traditional familial roles" (Gal. 3:28-29).[99]

D. Lloyd Lewis, in his essay "An African-American Appraisal of the Philemon-Paul-Onesimus Triangle" says that Paul suggests in Gal. 3:26-28 a new order. He suggests that the old structures of subordination no longer hold for those who are baptized into Christ. Lewis says that Paul not only defines the community, but uses family language; this indicates the ideal attitudes that members of the body of Christ

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[98]Jewett, The Ordination of Women, 165.

[99]Clarice J. Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African-American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women'," In Stony the Road We Trod. An African-American Biblical Interpretation, ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 212.

should have toward one another.[100]

A Womanist View

For the Womanist, Jesus is redeemer, liberator, and the one who sustains us through all of life's pain and joy. In Jesus there is hope, sanctification, justification, and salvation.[101] As Jacquelyn Grant says, "Jesus is our divine co-sufferer, the one who empowers us in situations of oppression."[102] And most of all, Jesus is our everything. Because Jesus is our sustainer, comforter, and co-sufferer, Jesus does not seek to strengthen the chains of human bondage and subjugation; rather, Jesus seeks to destroy the yokes that bind us.[103]

African-American women struggle in the love of Christ to be free knowing that Jesus is the equalizer. We continue to draw from the well of God's word to nourish our wombs. Hierarchical interpreters may suggest that we are only equal in our spirits. However, we struggle to be free from the mental chains of sexism, from the physical chains of abuse and from the chains of social class that continue to margin-

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[100]Lloyd A. Lewis, "An African-American Appraisal of the Philemon-Paul-Onesimus Triangle," In Stony the Road We Trod. An African-American Biblical Interpretation, ed. Cain Hope Felder (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 239.

[101]Linda J. Boston, "A Womanist Reflection on 1 Corinthians 7:21-24 and 1 Corinthians 14:33-35", Journal of Women's Religion, 9, (1990-1991), 81-89.

[102]Ibid.

[103]Ibid.

alize women. Galatians 3:28 is a pathway out of the agony of pain to equality. The Womanist perspective continues to affirm that sexism is an evil equal to racism. The struggle in the Black church must include the acknowledgment that sexism is a sin. Consequently, this acknowledgment must be followed by confession and conversion. Many African-American males utilize Galatians 3:28 to address racism. However, they discriminate against African-American women, and seem incapable of applying this same verse against sexism. Some men see the church as the only place where they can maintain power. Womanist thinkers continue to attack the powers that deny the rights of marginal voices.

When we turn to scripture for guidance we should do so from our experience, looking for that which promotes Christ in all scripture, including Paul's ethical teachings. We must be mindful, however, that scripture is subject to human interpretation. Thus we are always wrestling with a never-ending challenge to disrobe the word in order to see Christ. There are special principles laid down in scripture which do not adequately reflect Christ or uplift God; these we test and prove by our own experience with and of the divine.[104]

Womanist theology speaks against that which does not promote Christ, and in its misapplication causes harm to our neighbor.

"As the gap between the races and sexes continues to

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[104]Ibid.

> grow, the womanist voice cries out loudly, 'we need, we must, and we will be heard'". For it is through our experience that one can accurately begin the complicated methodological study of the relationship between racism, classism, and sexism with the aim of eradicating these sins.[105]

Galatians 3:26-29 is an anthem of emancipation to the theme lines of liberationist theology, and a hymn of equality to Womanist theology.

While reading Galatians 3:28 from an Afrocentric Womanist hermeneutical perspective, three statements of liberation were coined as foundational for the project:

Baptism in Christ means we are liberated from the Eurocentric patriarchal interpretation that affirms racism.

Baptism in Christ means we are liberated from the limited view of Black Theology, in that Black Theology tends to limit its liberation to the issue of race.

Baptism in Christ from the Womanist perspective interprets Galatians 3:23-28 as the text that frees black people from all forms of discrimination in church and society.

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[105]Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

Theologically, an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic is essential to, 1) eliminate the misconceptions of patriarchal leadership in the local church, and 2) to advocate a theology of inclusion. Local congregations are infiltrated with vigorous sermonizers who have used scripture to subjugate African-American women in the church. The African-American church needs a hermeneutic that will enlighten and encourage lay people to address the question of female leadership in the local church.

Womanist and Black liberationists must begin to struggle with issues of bondage and how it has prohibited the African-American race from *succeeding* in America. African-American males will march for freedom among the races every day if needed, but they continue to enjoy the patriarchal framework that is instituted in this society. Our theology must address people from every area of bondage or enslavement. We cannot teach freedom among the races as new life in Christ, and forget to free the sisters.

Now is the time for African-American theologians to deal with the difficult question of equality. Is God a sexist? Was Jesus a sexist? Is the gospels' freedom only

given to a certain race, sex, or class? What has been our experience as African-Americans in this country? How has our theology played a role of freedom from institutions of bondage?

Witherington says if he is right, Jesus was attempting to reform, not reject the patriarchal framework of his culture; then it is understandable why Paul and other New Testament authors sought to redefine, not reject, the concept of male leadership in light of Christian or biblical ideas. "Paul may be encouraging women to exercise their spiritual gifts in a way that did not involve the violation of their husbands' headship."[106]

Witherington supports the patriarchal system but sees nothing in the Bible that suggests women did not assume or should not assume a variety of roles in the church--teaching, preaching, prophesying, providing material support, hosting church functions, etc. He says the question of women's ordination is not discussed or dismissed in the New Testament, but there is nothing in the material that rules out such a possibility. He argues that, if it is possible for women in the New Testament to do ministries, then it is also possible for women to do ministries today associated with ordained ministry.[107] Witherington seems

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[106]Ben Witherington III, Women and the Genesis of Christian, ed. Ann Witherington (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990).

[107]Ibid., 245.

to picture the patriarchal system continuing as women are permitted to take on new roles in the religious community.[108]

However, Swartley poses this question: Does the Bible teach a specific hierarchy and prescribed roles for men and women? Or is the Bible itself a liberating resource for oppressed women and men? Does the scripture command women to be veiled and silent in public worship, thus excluding ordination? Or does the scripture welcome and even commend women in an unrestricted variety of Christian ministries dependent upon gifts and calling?[109]

These are the questions that must be dealt with in our churches. Swartley says we cannot answer these questions by choosing between Paul and Jesus because there are places where Jesus appointed only males and entrusted the official leadership of the Kingdom movement only to men. Then there is Paul, who wrote "In Christ there is neither male nor female." The real issue is that the Bible may be used to argue either for or against women's liberation.[110]

Swartley gives examples of what he means by using the Bible to argue for or against "hierarchical" or "liberationist" views. The hierarchicalist argues that women are subordinate to men in every aspect of life. The liberation-

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[108]Ibid., 250.

[109]Swartley, Slavery Sabbath War and Women, 150.

[110]Ibid., 151.

ist argues that women and men are called to share as equals in relationships. The hierarchicalist argues that women are especially subservient in the home because the husband is the head of the household. The liberationist argues that the Bible does not dictate social prescribed roles of leadership, but leadership should be determined by abilities, needs, and agreements. The hierarchicalist argues that women should not have any positions of authority in the church that are not exercised under the leadership of men. The liberationist argues that the gifts of men and women should determine their participation in the leadership of church ministries.[111]

Swartley says that these opposing sides can argue their positions from biblical texts. History teaches us that the Bible can be misused to support many different points of view.

For the last three to four decades, during the freedom movements, Black women have experienced the insensitive response of Black churches to sexism. Addressing sexism is not a priority for the vast majority of Black churches. One reason sexism is not a priority is that we live under the notion of "Women stay in your places." Many Black males view sexism as a priority for white middle class females. Only recently has the issue begun to be raised as a priority in some Black churches, primarily because of the efforts of

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[111]Ibid., 151.

some women and some men to celebrate women who lived in the past and present, "out of their places." We now have began to praise the works of our "sheroes" like Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Rosa Parks.[112]

Frances Beale examines the treatment of Black women in America. Beale explains that America has set certain standards that imply manhood and concepts of how women should be treated. It's just a dream for Black women, but a reality for white middle class women.

To clarify this point, she uses Sojourner Truth's speech at a Women's Rights Convention "Ar'nt I a woman?" The reality is Black women are "slaves of slaves" by reducing the Black man in America to such object oppression, the Black woman had no protector and was used, and is still being used in some cases, as the scapegoat for the evils that this horrendous system has perpetrated on Black men.[113]

Black women have suffered physical, sexual, and economic abuse through the exploitation of white men, white women, and black men. Black women have been constantly told to take a back seat and assume the domestic role. Beale argues that we must begin to eliminate every kind of oppres-

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[112]Frances Beale, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female," Black Theology a documentary history volume one: 1966-1979, ed. James H. Cone & Gayraud S. Wilmore. (Mary Knoll, New York: Oribis, 1993), 284.

[113]Ibid., 286.

sion in our society that is abusive. In addition, the Black community and Black women must raise the questions about the kind of society we wish to establish:

> The new world we are attempting to create must destroy oppression of any type .... Unless women in any enslaved nation are completely liberated, the change cannot really be called a revolution. If the Black woman has to retreat to the position she occupied before the armed struggle, the whole movement and the whole struggle will be retracted in terms of truly freeing the colonized population.[114]

Black people must begin to realize that oppression is a sickness in our society. We must understand that sexism is like cancer and it is eating away at the core of what it means to have liberation in America.

Theressa Hoover raises similar concerns:

> It has long been an established fact in American life that color is a deterrent to high achievement; not because there is inherent inferiority, but because societal conditions predetermine lower achievement. Thus, while every woman in America faces economic and political discrimination, a woman who is black has an added barrier.[115]

Hoover argues that women who dedicate themselves to service within the church suffer from triple jeopardy because they must also deal with the rejection from that institution. She encourages Black church women to challenge the sisters in other denominations and also the hierarchy of clerical males in her own denomination against the discrimi-

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[114]Ibid., 291.

[115]Theressa Hoover, "Black Women and the Churches: Triple Jeopardy," Black Theology a documentary history volume one: 1966-1979, James H. Cones & Gayraud S. Wilmore, eds. (Mary Knoll, New York: Oribis, 1993), 293.

nation of women in the church. "Black women are the most oppressed, yet the least heard."[116] Women give faithful service, have tremendous spirit, and feed the preacher well. They are the majority in number, yet they are oppressed and silent.[117]

"Triple jeopardy" (being Black, female, and clergy) caused me to lead a march down Main Street in July of 1993. Women in the Lexington community reported that they were not allowed to participate or give leadership to the worshipping community. The theme of the march was "Leadership in the church not male only; Mary told the Boys He's Up." The purpose of the march was to lift up to the community the oppression of women in the churches in our town. Black women have been told that the church is a "Holy Cow" not to be tampered with. So on any given Sunday morning in Lexington, Black women with Ph.D's, M.D.'s, and many other degrees, submit themselves to support an institution that views women as less, and openly elevates men as more. It is difficult to disguise the anger when you observe that the church you have given years of service to has an invisible ceiling, and treats Black women like second-class citizens.

In summary, we must continue to stand inside the church in order to destroy the walls from the inside so

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[116]Ibid., 302.

[117]Ibid., 302.

that the whole community of faith will be served equally.[118]

Theologian Doctor Jacquelyn Grant is concerned about the Black women who call into question Black theology. Grant observes that Latin American women have called their male colleagues to address the issue of oppressive ideologies. Latin American women challenged their male counterparts to deal with Gal. 3:28 and the implications for a new theological dialogue in their context.[119]

Grant poses the following question: "Where is the Black woman in Black theology?"[120] Her answer is that Black women are invisible, but need to present a challenge to Black theology. Her point is that the Black church and Black community need to be informed about the sexist elements in our own theology.[121]

Grant argues that: 1) either Black women have no place in the enterprise, or 2) Black men are capable of speaking for us. She declares that both assumptions are false because they emerge out of a male-dominated culture that allowed men to speak for women. It is not an accident

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[118]Ibid.

[119]Jacquelyn Grant, "Black Theology and The Black Woman," In Black Theology a documentary history volume one: 1966-1979, ed. James H. Cone & Gayraud S. Wilmore (Mary Knoll, New York: Oribis, 1993), 324.

[120]Ibid., 325.

[121]Ibid.

that all of the recognized Black theologians are men:

> This is what might be expected given the status and power accorded to the discipline of theology. Professional theology is done by those who are highly trained. It requires, moreover, mastery of that power most accepted in the definition of manhood, the power or ability to "reason." This is supposedly what opens the door to participation in logical philosophical debates and discussions presupposing rigorous intellectual training, for most of history outside the "women's sphere."[122]

Grant broadens the discussion by bringing into focus the stereotypical distinctions between the nature of women and men. Women are emotional and men are rational and intellectual. Women are limited to domestic matters at home while men are free to explore the important matters of work. She says when sexual dualism has its run in the Black community, it will be hard to explain why Black women are invisible in Black theology.[123] She concludes that if liberation of women is not preached, then the church cannot preach about divine liberation. If the church does not share the struggle of Black women, then its struggle is not authentic.

> One can see the contradictions between the church's language or proclamation of liberation and its action by looking both at the status of Black women in the church as laity and Black women in the ordained ministry of the church.[124]

Black preachers have managed to preach liberation of the races while at the same time excluding the oppression of

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[122]Ibid., 325.

[123]Ibid., 325.

[124]Ibid., 328.

Black women in the gospel they preach. "Any correct analysis of the poor and oppressed would reveal some interesting and inescapable facts about the situation of women within oppressed groups."[125]

Grant says "It is difficult to understand how Black men manage to exclude the Black woman from their interpretation of the liberating gospel."[126] In comparison to Black men, white females, and white males, Black females are at the bottom. Black theology can no longer treat Black women as invisible creatures. They must no longer be considered outsiders, but they must take their rightful place as a part of the Black experience. Black women are more than 50% of the Black community and more than 70% of the Black church.

How then can an authentic theology of liberation arise out of these communities without specifically addressing the liberation of women in both church and society? Does the fact that certain questions are raised by Black women make them any less important?[127] In other words, it is impossible to fight against racism without addressing the issue of sexism. It is impossible to liberate Black people and leave Black women in bondage. The issue of sexism must be elevated to the table of liberation in Black theology:

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[125]Ibid., 332.

[126]Ibid.

[127]Ibid., 334.

> The term "Black Theology" was created in this social and religious context. It was initially understood as the theological arm of Black power, and it enabled us to express our theological imagination in the struggle of freedom independently of white theologians.[128]

If in fact "Black theology" was created to address the needs of the Black community to express and define themselves beyond white theologians, it should also acknowledge all the oppression of Black people and not focus only on race. Black theology should preach a holistic freedom of sex, race, and class. The holistic theology that our community seeks can be lodged in a Womanist theology. It is supportive of Black theology but also critiques the liberationist theology of Black male theologians:[129]

> Although womanists express solidarity with Black male theologians in the fight against white supremacy, they are feminists and therefore join with white feminists in the struggle against patriarchy, an evil as destructive to the freedom of the human community as racism. Womanist identity as women means that Black men do not know what Black women know even though their race is the same.[130]

Womanists are not defined by Black male liberationists nor by white feminists. They insist on the right to name their own experience and give account of their own

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[128]James H. Cone, "Black Theology and The Black Church: Where Do We Go From Here," In Black Theology a documentary history volume one: 1966-1979, ed. James H. Cone & Gayraud S. Wilmore (Mary Knoll, New York: Oribis, 1993), 268.

[129]James H. Cone, "Womanist Theology," In Black Theology a documentary history volume two: 1980-1992, ed. James H. Cone & Gayraud S. Wilmore (Mary Knoll, New York: Oribis, 1993), 257.

[130]Ibid.

survival and liberation.[131] Womanist theology is the bridge that will cross us over to the "Promised Land." As we experience a theology that imagines freedom for all the oppressed, we will experience the "Land Flowing with Milk and Honey," but not until the day when Black male preachers can imagine a church without limitation on gender. This will not occur until the Black laity have been preached out of a patriarchal theology into a truly liberationist theology, a theology that allows room for all of the community to share their experiences.

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[131]Ibid.

CHAPTER 4

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MODEL OF MINISTRY

Methodology

Procedure

Two research techniques were used to gather a group of African-American lay people to educate them on the propriety of ordaining women: the research practice of populations and sampling frames and the classical experiment. "Simply put, a sampling frame is the list or quasi-list of elements from which a probability sample is selected."[132]

For example, the data for this research were obtained from a random sample of African-American lay people in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. Although there are 148 African-American churches, we only sampled members from about 15 congregations. The sample group of participants will be taken as a representation of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ African-American Churches.

The classical experiment contains three major pairs of components. It contains independent and dependent variables, pretesting and post-testing, and experimental and

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[132]Earl R. Babbie, The Practice of Social Research, 7th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1995), 204.

control groups.[133]

Independent and Dependent Variables

> The experiment examines the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable. Typically, the independent variable takes the form of an experimental stimulus, which is either present or absent: that is, a dichotomous variable, having attributes.[134]

In the example concerning sexism against African-American women ordained in the African-American churches in the United Church of Christ, sexism is the dependent variable and exposure to historical biblical interpretation of women's roles in the church is the independent variable.

One of the reasons why most African-American churches are not opened to women as pastor of local congregations is because of the teaching of biblical roles and places of women. Therefore, the interpretation of biblical text has caused women to be viewed as less than men and unable to give leadership to the local church.

Pretesting and Post-Testing

The pretest and post-test measured as dependent variables. The post-test has the attribute of influence of the independent variable.[135]

In this case, the pretest allowed participants to express their attitudes and knowledge of biblical interpretation concerning the roles of women in the church. They

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[133]Ibid, 234.

[134]Ibid.

[135]Ibid.

were then exposed to Womanist biblical interpretation, Black theology and Feminist theology, after which the post-test was given. With these tools of measurement, one could test changes in the participant between the pretest and post-test.

The Third Pair

Experimental and control groups were least used in this model of ministry. The experimental group was used in that we would pretest a group, expose them to biblical interpretation, and then would post-test them afterward, but a control group was not used in this study.[136] The experimental group was deemed sufficient.

A number of things occurred to make this project possible. One of the context associates was on the staff of the National Office for Church Life and Leadership. He was leaving to go back to the Southern Conference as a local pastor and one of the directors of programming at the Franklinton Center, Franklinton, North Carolina. He informed me in February 1994 that he had grant money that may assist me in getting people to Franklinton Center for a retreat. The money would help pay the room and board for the African-American lay people, and about three meals during the process of the retreat.

When I decided to do this project in the Southern Conference, I wrote the conference minister a letter re-

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[136]Ibid., 258.

questing the names and location of African-American churches, and the socio-economic setting. I never received it, but I did get the cooperation of one of the associate conference ministers to help as a context associate.

Once the grant was forwarded to the Franklinton Center from the Office for Church Life and Leadership, the dates and the times were worked out for the retreat. I felt Friday night to Saturday would work, and then people could travel home after lunch on Saturday, but the context associates from the Southern Conference said that people would not give up both Friday and Saturday. They recommended a Thursday night to Friday morning. They said people would take a day off from work. We planned the retreat for October 27-28, 1994.

Another concern was the design of the questionnaire that would give me information needed about each person, but also test their knowledge and attitude. I consulted with Terry Woods, an expert at the University of Kentucky in Research and Development. She met with me about four times before the final document was agreed upon. The first draft of the questionnaire was looked over by the context associate at the United Black Christians. Because United Black Christians brings a large group of Black Christians together, we used lay people during the two hour workshop to test the questionnaire and the model of ministry. We used it as a discussion model and also used the responses. After my

context associates in the Southern Conference affirmed the instrument, Terry Woods and I created the final document for testing. It was approved by the context associates before its use.

As far as the procedure for the model of ministry, everything seems to be in place. The context associates would make sure that the center was available and we would be able to use it. They would be the one to reprint the questionnaire, mail out the notice for the retreat, and invite lay people. I would mail them any materials, hand-outs, or worksheets we would be using and they would put together packets for the participants.

Preparation

As we prepared for the retreat, the context associates from the Southern Conference and I talked several times by conference calls to decide who would be responsible for the different tasks to support the project. The associate conference minister had access to long distance calling and clerical services, so he accepted the task of mailing out the retreat forms and copying the necessary materials as I mailed them to him. He was also the one who called us on the conference calls. The local pastor and the director of the Franklinton Center was responsible for meeting me in Raleigh, North Carolina, and taking me to the retreat center. He also served as facilitator for the program and the center. He selected the menu for the meals and set the

times we should eat. He was responsible for the worship space and the learning space. The context associates in the Southern Conference were responsible for all of the preliminary on-site work.

Meanwhile, the context associates in Lexington, Kentucky were preparing to travel with me to North Carolina. In the process the Kentucky Baptist had voted not to allow women to vote in their convention and had also dismissed five churches who had ordained women as ministers. The context associates were not ready to leave Lexington to go to North Carolina without somehow addressing the issue at home. So we organized a Women's Conference to educate women on the issues of freedom in the church. We also held a vigil downtown, outside the same hotel that Kentucky Baptist's voted to silence women in one convention. At this point, the two context associates in Emmanuel United Church of Christ were ready to participate in the project. They helped to put the information packets together. One of the context associates typed the programs, the questionnaire, the pamphlets, and the study guide for the lessons. The other context associate rewrote my manuscript so that it could be typed.

During the writing of my first three chapters and the women's conference, I used my expert consultant in New Testament, Dr. Sharon Dowd. She put together the handout that I used to help explain the Scripture during the retreat

time. She was very helpful in explaining to me some of the Scriptures I did not clearly understand. She read over my materials and gave constructive criticism on how I should use the materials.

Terry Woods, helped construct an instrument that would be "people friendly." She taught me how to rephrase questions and get greater results. She helped to design the questionnaire in a fashion that, after it was complete, it would be easy to evaluate. She examined the questionnaire for leading questions and directed me to give people space to answer. We met in her office at the University of Kentucky twice and had numerous phone conferences before we came up with the final instrument. Of course, the context associates in North Carolina and Lexington had an opportunity to give suggestions for the questionnaire. After putting the first questionnaire together, I brought it to Terry Woods' office, and we went through at least three rough drafts. Terry had a copy, my mentors had copies, and the context associates had copies of the questionnaire. In essence, it was the context associates, mentors, Ms. Woods and I who developed the final questionnaire.

The context associates and I determined about how much time lay people would be willing to volunteer to the project. The two context associates from Emmanuel both work full-time and would have to take time off from their jobs. Both of the context associates would have to take vacation

days. We considered that many people may not be interested in taking more than one day off from work, so we acquiesced to get the largest gathering we could in a one-time event.

After consulting with the context associates, the experts, and observing the process of the Women's Conference, we focused on four issues for the retreat. It was important that African-American people understand that racism and sexism have the same potential for destruction of persons; that women have always been used by God; that Jesus had a special relationship with women; and that the United Church of Christ is called to be an inclusive church. After we agreed upon the four issues we would concentrate on, we decided we needed four sessions during the retreat to discuss each of the issues. We needed time for the pretest, discussion, dinner, breakfast and lunch, the post-test, and breaks. We decided that we would start with dinner, do the pretest and one lesson on the first night, and use the second day for three lessons and the post-test.

We used a variety of resources for the retreat. The handouts were the "Household Codes" and explanation of II Corinthians 14:33-36. We prepared a portable library of authors we would discuss, and we also used the chapter on II Corinthians 14:33-36, and Galatians 5:23-28 that I did for background work. The study guide for each lesson gave definitions and also left space for comments. (See Appendix C)

Design

Session Design

The sessions were divided into four learning workshops. Each session was designed to engage African-American lay people in discussion after exposing them to Scripture, Afrocentric theology, and African-American theologians.

The time allotted for each session was one hour, which included a ten minute break. The learning workshops were designed to be completed in a four-hour time period. Therefore, the four sessions could occur in one day or be spread over a number of days.

Each session consisted of a presentation and a question and answer period, followed by a discussion. The presentation was intended to share knowledge and expose lay people to Afrocentric literature. The question and answer period was designed to allow lay people to express their opinions. The discussion period was to encourage lay people to examine solutions by entering into dialogue with each other.

Session one was entitled, "Racism, Sexism, and the Bible." It was designed to encourage African-American lay people to explore the similarities of racism, sexism, and its impact on the Bible as it is interpreted today.

Session two was entitled, "Women and Their Roles in the Bible and the Church." This session was composed to allow lay people to review the call stories of people from

biblical days, historical days, and the present time. This session sought to educate lay people on the historical roles women played in church and society, as well as the roles they participate in today.

Session three was entitled, "Jesus's Role in the Liberation of Women: Sin in the First Adam and Liberation Through the Second Adam." The purpose of this session was to expose lay people to the different barriers Jesus faced as he empowered women to do ministry.

Session four was entitled, "The Call to be an Inclusive Church!" Lay people were exposed to a Bible study on Galatians 3:23-28. They were encouraged to discuss the text and give examples of how the text could be applicable to their lives. The concluding part of the session was designed to present a biblical approach and challenge to support the call to be an inclusive church.

Measurement Instruments Design

A pretest questionnaire consisting of 64 questions was designed to test knowledge, attitudes, and actions of lay people toward women before the four training sessions.

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of 11 questions. This section was designed to collect biographical information and also information about the persons who nurtured the participant spiritually. The collected information included: an identification number, sex, marital status, address, highest level of education completed,

employment status, and persons who nurtured the participant spiritually.

The second section included 14 questions to reveal the participant's awareness of women in ministry: 1) familiar with female preachers, 2) female preachers in their community, 3) heard a female preach, 4) response to the female's preaching, 5) female preaching an issue in church and community, 6) local church support of female preachers, 7) how? 8) heard debates over women's ordination, 9) what? 10) discussed the issue of women's ordination, 11) opinion, 12) viewpoint on the ordination of women, 13) the best way women's ordination can be addressed, 14) suggestions for women preparing for ordination.

The third section of the questionnaire contained 8 questions concerning personal opinions about male and female preachers: 1) images of male preachers, 2) images of female preachers, 3) qualities and strengths unique to women in ministry, 4) problems/weaknesses unique to women in ministry, 5) solutions to the problems/weaknesses of women in ministry, 6) qualities/strengths unique to men in ministry, 7) problems/weaknesses unique to men in ministry, 8) solutions to the problems/weaknesses of men in ministry.

The fourth section of the questionnaire included 5 questions about the participant's personal opinions about church and community: 1) the problem of racism in your community, 2) church and community working on racism, 3) the

problem of sexism in the community, 4) church and community working on racism, 5) three issues the church and community should be working on.

The fifth section consisted of 13 questions designed to measure the role of Scripture, individual theological concepts, and books in the shaping of participant's positions on women in ministry. This section sought to measure familiarity of key biblical passages, as well as noted liberationist scholars and books.

The sixth section of the questionnaire contained one question that requests the participant to record the date and place where they heard a female minister preach. It also contained 12 statements to which the participant was asked to respond on a 4 point Likert response scale: very effective (v.e.), somewhat effective (s.e.), somewhat ineffective (s.i.), and very ineffective (v.i.). The Likert scale response system is a tool designed to collect opinions. "It is a systematic and refined means for constructing indexes from questionnaire data."[137] This section was also designed to elicit attitudes and opinions about how participants respond to female preaching. In addition, 5 questions in part two of section six request that participants put an "X" on the continuum at the point that describes their opinion about a particular statement.

The post-test questionnaire was identical to the

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[137]Ibid., 180.

pretest questionnaire. It was also designed to test knowledge, attitudes, and actions of participants after they had been exposed to four learning workshops.

Model of Ministry Design

The variables in this model are: the United Church of Christ, a select group of African-American lay people in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ and the workshop leaders.

The national level of the United Church of Christ is engaged in ministry with women as leaders, and also supports the call of women as leaders of local churches. Although this is a national concern for the whole church, the local churches are not engaged in measurable effective ministry with women. One reason the local church does not accept women as leaders is that lay people in the local congregations are not educated about the role of women leaders in the Bible. Therefore, African-American lay people reject women as leaders in local churches. The Southern Conference comprises more than half of the African-American churches.

The model seeks to educate African-American lay people on the propriety of ordaining women in ministry and engaging in serious ministry at the local church with women. Therefore eighteen African-American women and seven African-American men were selected and exposed to four learning workshops to determine the effectiveness of this training on their knowledge, attitudes, and actions. The participants

were: mostly married, between the ages of 35-80 years old, members of the United Church of Christ for over 20 years, and well educated. The selected lay-group was an important variable because they were a sample representative group of lay
people in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The workshop leader was an African-American female minister ordained in the United Church of Christ. She was employed full-time as a pastor in a local congregation, 38 years old, has a Master of Divinity degree, and single. The leader was an important variable because she was a representative of ordained female ministers in the United Church of Christ.

One distinctive aspect of this model is the focus on lay people as opposed to clergy. This model seeks to educate lay people rather than clergy persons on the importance of being an inclusive church. Most programs in the United Church of Christ try to educate clergy persons to support women in ministry. Many lay people have learned to disenfranchise women as a result of theological rhetoric they heard from the clergy. This model is designed to train lay people to train other lay people to accept sexism as a sin equal to racism.

The model was designed to connect African-American lay people's pain of racism with African-American women's

pain due to sexism. Because all African-American lay people have at one time or another experienced racism, we thought that raising the issue of sexism along side racism would help them to understand the discrimination women go through in ministry just because they are women. Placing the issues side by side hopefully will raise the consciousness of African-American lay people and cause them to see a need for affirmation of women in ministry.

The Bible was the primary source in designing the model; all other sources were secondary. Exegetical information and scholarly interpretation were used as sources, and general books were referred to as points of references during the workshops.

The replicability of the model is self-evident in that it is already being used as a three-week Bible study in a local church in Norfolk, Virginia. During the last presentation of the model in March, two women participants in the retreat asked to use the leftover material in their church. They expressed the need for this type of information to be transported to the local church as soon as possible. The need was so urgent that they took it upon themselves as Bible study leaders in their local church to use the model for the next three weeks.

Implementation

Implementation of the model occurred October 27-28, 1994, at Franklinton Retreat Center in Franklinton, North

Carolina. The retreat started on a Thursday night at 7 p.m. and lasted until Friday about 1:30 p.m. A month before the retreat, a descriptive pamphlet was mailed to the Southern Conference office, and the context associate (Associate Conference) was responsible for mailing it out to the participants.

The target group was 20 churches with two people from each of the congregations. The group would be diverse in age, sex and association, yet the actual number of people who shared were 11. They were from Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, but only seven were able to participate through the total process. The seven consisted of three men and four women. Because the group was so small, adjustments were necessary. We began to look for another time and place. We were unable to plan another meeting in 1994. The relationship between the context associate and myself was at a standstill. Then the Conference Associate called and gave me the names of Linda Black and Horace Britt. They are leaders of the regional United Black Christians. They were able to put together another time for the retreat. Because time was so short and we needed to get as many people as possible, we selected a Saturday to go through the program. We met on Saturday, March 4, 1995, in Suffolk, Virginia, at Tabernacle United Church of Christ on Washington Avenue.

The context associates from Lexington and I arrived

at Tabernacle United Church of Christ at 8:30 a.m., Saturday, March 4, 1995. We prepared breakfast, lunch and snacks for 50, but only 25 attended.

During the time together there were three designated leaders. Horace Britt gave us directions of where to find the restrooms, special needs, meals and telephones. He served as our host; Tabernacle is his home church. He welcomed us and invited us to make ourselves at home. Linda was our second designated leader. She is the president of United Black Christians for that area and was the one who invited many of the people along with Horace to the meeting. She picked up the registration forms, welcomed the participants, passed out material, and introduced the workshop leader. She also approved the cost of food and paid the bill from her United Black Christians' budget.

I was the third leader and presenter of the workshop. I began each workshop and encouraged input from the participants. I was the timekeeper whenever participants would go into another area of study. My job was to keep them focused on the topic before us.

During the first workshop, people had long breaks and an overnight stay, but this time everything had to be done between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. The workshop began at about 8:30 a.m. We opened with worship by using Galatians 3:28. We had a hymn by the participants, prayer, and a homily by the workshop leader. Worship lasted for one-half

hour.

The next step was pretesting. We handed out the materials and gave people about 45 minutes to fill it out. Most people finished in that time period. After the pre-test, the participants were allowed a break for snacks. The room was very large and we were grouped into a square with four tables. The snack tables were stationed right behind us in the same room so that people did not have to leave the room except to go to restrooms. Because of the large space, people were also able to stand up and walk whenever they needed to stretch. This was helpful because it turned our learning time into a very comfortable setting.

Session one began about 9:45 a.m. and lasted for fifty minutes. Each session followed consecutively until all four were completed and ended with the post-test. After the post-test, we had closing prayer, and dinner was served about 3:00 p.m. Participants had fellowship with each other while they were eating, and departed afterwards.

CHAPTER 5

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF THE MODEL

Results and Evaluations

Section One

Section one of the questionnaire consisted of 11 questions designed to obtain primarily demographic information. The number of African-American lay people (AALP) involved in the target group was 27. Out of the 27 African-American lay people (AALP), only 25 completed the pretest and post-test. These findings only list and indicate the responses of the 25 African-American lay people (AALP) who completed both pretest and post-test. Therefore, the target group (TG) consisted of 25 people, the pretest participants are represented by T_1 and the post-test participants by T_2. "C" will be used to show the changes between the pretest and the post-test.

Table 1 reflects the distribution of participants by age. There is an even distribution of participants in the target group (TG) as well as those who completed the pretest (T_1), and post-test (T_2). In each case the majority falls between the ages of 35-80 years old.

Table 1.--African-American Lay People by Age Group

Age Group	TG	T_1	T_2
0-17	4% (1)	4% (1)	4.5% (1)
18-34	8% (2)	8% (2)	9.5% (2)
35-49	28% (7)	28% (7)	31.5% (7)
50-65	24% (6)	24% (6)	18.2% (4)
66-80	24% (6)	24% (6)	22.8% (5)
81-over	4% (1)	4% (1)	4.5% (1)
unknown	8% (2)	8% (2)	9.5% (2)
Totals	25	25	22

Note: Figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 2 shows that 72% of the African-American lay people (AALP) in the target group as well as those who completed both tests were women. Seven of the participants were male, and eighteen of the participants were female.

Table 2.--African-American Lay People by Sex

Sex	TG	T_1	T_2
Female	72% (18)	72% (18)	72% (18)
Male	28% (7)	28% (7)	28% (7)
Totals	25	25	25

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 3 shows the make-up of the target group according to marital status. The table reveals that most of the target group has been married at one time or another. At the present time, 48% of the target group is married, 4% are separated, 16% are divorced and 20% has never been married. Out of the target group, 12% of the people's marital status is unknown. The pretest is based on 22 people's response to the marital status question. Fifty-four percent are married, 4.5% are separated, 18.2% are divorced, and 22.7% have never married. The post-test reveals that out of 20 respondents, 55% are married, 5% separated, 20% divorced and 20% never married. Hence, the dominant group in this project are married.

Table 3.--African-American Lay People's Marital Status

Marital Status	TG	T_1	T_2
Married	48% (12)	54.5% (12)	55.0% (11)
Separated	4% (1)	4.5% (1)	5.0% (1)
Divorced	16% (4)	18.3% (4)	20.0% (4)
Never Married	20% (5)	22.7% (5)	20.0% (4)
Unknown	12% (3)		
Totals	25	22	20

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 4 reveals the level of education the group has received. The prominent observation is that most of the participants have completed some college. In each test group, it is revealed that most of the participants have some college. (56% of the TG, 60.8% of the pretest group, and 65.7% of the post-test group have some college education.)

Table 4.--Level of Education of AALP

Education Level	TG	T_1	T_2
Some High School	12%(3)	13.0%(3)	9.5%(2)
GED	4%(1)	4.3%(1)	4.8%(1)
High School Graduate	20%(5)	21.7%(5)	19.0%(4)
Some College	28%(7)	30.4%(7)	47.6%(10)
College Graduate	8%(2)	8.7%(2)	4.8%(1)
Master	16%(4)	17.4%(4)	14.3%(3)
Higher than Master	4%(1)	4.5%(1)	
Unknown	8%(2)		
Totals	25	23	21

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 5 shows the employment status of the participants (AALP) in the target group and reveals that the majority of the people are still working (48% of the TG, 52.2% of the T_1 group, and 57.9% of the T_2 group work full-time). Although almost half of the target group status is full-time, there are a large number of participants who are retired (36% of the TG, 39.1% of the T_1 and 31.6% of the T_2).

So there is a very strong composition of full-time participants and retired participants. Table 5 shows a very low number of part-time persons among the participants (TG 8%, pretest 8.7%, post-test 10.5%). Hence, the largest group consists of full-time and retired persons, while the smallest group consists of part-time persons (TG = 8%, T_1 = 9%, T_2 = 10.5%).

Table 5.--Employment Status (AALP)

Employment Status	TG	T_1	T_2
Full-time	48%(12)	52.0%(12)	57.9%(11)
Part-time	8% (2)	9.0% (2)	10.5% (2)
Retired	36% (9)	39.0% (9)	31.6% (6)
Unknown	8% (2)		
Total	25	23	19

Note: Figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 6 shows the length of church attendance. Significantly the largest group of African-American lay

people have been in the church for over 21 years (TG = 68%, T_2 = 60.5%). The second largest group have attended church 5 years or less (TG = 16%, T_1 = 16%, T_2 = 16.5%).

Table 6.--Length of Church Attendance

Length of Church Attendance	TG	T_1	T_2
1-5 years	16% (4)	16% (4)	16.5% (3)
6-10 years	4% (1)	4% (1)	6.5% (1)
11-15 years	4% (1)	4% (1)	
16-20 years	8% (2)	8% (2)	16.5% (3)
21-over	68%(17)	68%(17)	60.5%(11)
Totals	25	25	18

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 7 sheds light on who helped to shape the participant's views about women in ministry. During the pretest the majority of lay people said they were influenced by pastors (T_1 42.9%), but the post-test results show that the majority of lay people are now influenced by UBC conferences (T_2 = 44.4%). Between the pretest, the four learning experiences, and the post-test, lay people's minds were changed. The change could be attributed to different time periods in the life of the lay people. For example: Lay people early in life may have been influenced by their pastor, but today they are influenced by educational events sponsored by UBC.

Table 7.--Helper of Belief about Women

Helper of beliefs about women	T_1	T_2	Change
Clergy Person	42.9%(9)	33.3%(6)	-9.6%
Family Member	14.4%(3)		
Friend	4.9%(1)		
Conferences UBC	4.9%(1)	44.4%(8)	-39.5%
Bible Study-Sunday	9.6%(2)	5.6%(1)	-4.0%
Reverend Rouser's workshop	4.9%(1)		
Blank - no answer	19.0%(4)	16.7%(3)	-2.3%
Totals	21	18	

Note: The figures in parentheses are the frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

A summary of the first section of the questionnaire shows the following:

1) People under 35 were under-represented in this group while people over 35 were over-represented (Table 1).

2) The target over-represented female and under-represented male. More than half of the target group were females (Table 2).

3) The majority of the lay people are married (Table 3).

4) Over 56% of the target group have attended or graduated from college (Table 4).

5) Full-time workers and retired persons represent the largest groups of participants (Table 5).

6) More than half of the participants have attended

church for more than 20 years (Table 6).

7) The post-test reveals that after the workshop more people were helped by United Black Christian Conferences than by a clergy person. The pretest reveals a larger number of participants being helped by a clergy person to develop their beliefs about women, but the post-test reveals a higher number decided that United Black Christians helped them.

It is significant to note my assumption that most lay people are helped by their pastors to develop their beliefs about women in ministry was confirmed in the pretest results. However, after the learning module, the post-test revealed that the majority of the lay people believed UBC conferences have changed their beliefs about women. The change between the pretest and post-test shows that 39.5% more people suggest that attending United Black Christians (UBC) conferences helped re-shape their beliefs about women in ministry. This workshop was co-sponsored by UBC and may have been perceived as a UBC conference by participants.

Section Two

In the second section of the questionnaire, lay people were asked to respond to a series of 14 questions that reflect their personal awareness of women in ministry. Because most of the participants answered these questions the same during the pretest and post-test, answers were correlated by gender so that it could be determined how

women and men respond to these questions differently. The chart contains data from the pretest correlated by gender. Only the questions that received significant responses are listed. A listing of all questions can be found in Appendix B.

1) "How familiar are you with female preachers?" Table 8 shows that most of the lay people were familiar with a female pastor or somewhat familiar.

Table 8: Familiarity with Female Preachers by Gender

	Female	Male
Very Familiar	58.8%(10)	14.3%(1)
Somewhat Familiar	29.4% (5)	57.1%(4)
Somewhat Unfamiliar	5.9% (1)	28.6%(2)
Not Familiar At All	5.9% (1)	
Totals	17	7

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 8 reveals that over 58.8% of the women were very familiar with female preachers while only 14.3% of the men were in this category. The largest group of men were somewhat familiar (57.1%) with female preachers. When both categories (very familiar and somewhat familiar) are combined it is evident that the majority of men and women are at least somewhat familiar with female preachers.

2) "Do you have female pastors in your local community?" Table 9 shows that the majority of women (82.4%) and all of the men (100%) are aware of female pastors in their

local community.

Table 9: Female Pastors in Local Community by Gender

	Female	Male
Female Pastors in Local Community:		
Yes	82.4%(14)	100%(7)
No	17.6% (3)	
Totals	17	7

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

3) "Have you ever heard a female preach?" Table 10 shows that all of the men and women had heard a woman preach.

Table 10: Ever Heard Female Preach by Gender

	Female	Male
Ever heard female preach:		
Yes	17(100%)	7(100%)
No	0	0
Totals	17	7

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

5) "What was your response?" Table 11 shows that hearing a woman preach was a very positive experience for more of the women (92.8%) than the men (71.4%). However, the dominant view for both men and women is positive. The only negative experience was reported by a male (14.3%).

Table 11: Response to Female Preachers by Gender

	Female	Male
Response:		
Very Positive	93.8%(15)	71.4%(5)
Somewhat Positive	6.2% (1)	14.3%(1)
Somewhat Negative	(0)	14.3%(1)
Very Negative	(0)	(0)
Totals	16	7

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

6) "Are female preachers an issue in your church and community?" Table 12 shows the response of the lay people by gender.

Table 12: Female Preaching an Issue in Church and Community by Gender

	Female	Male
Female Preaching An Issue In Church and Community:		
Not At All	14.3%(2)	57.1%(4)
Minor Issue	14.3%(2)	
Moderate Issue	57.1%(8)	42.9%(3)
Major Issue	14.3%(2)	
Totals	14	7

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

The vast majority of women (85.7%) believe that female preachers are an issue in their church and community, with more than 70% of them perceiving it to be a moderate to major issue. A significant difference in perception is

observed with the men's response: fifty-eight percent believe it is not an issue at all.

6) "Does your local church support female preachers?" Table 13 shows that all of the women (100%) and the vast majority of men (85.3%) participated in churches that support female preachers.

Table 13: Local Church Supports Female Preachers by Gender

Local Church Supports Female Preachers by Gender	Female	Male
Yes	100%(16)	85.3%(5)
No	(0)	16.7%(1)
Totals	16	6

Note:The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

10) "Have you ever discussed the issue of women's ordination?" Table 14 shows that the numbers are inverted. More women (52.9%) have discussed this issue then men (42.3%).

Table 14: Ever Discussed Women's Ordination by Gender

Discussed Women's Ordination	Female	Male
Yes	52.9%(9)	42.3%(3)
No	47.1%(8)	57.7%(4)
Totals	17	7

Note: Figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

A summary of Section two follows; this section used the pretest results correlated by gender to reveal participants' personal awareness of women in ministry: 1) The majority of women and men were familiar with female preachers (Table 8). 2) The majority of women and men who participated have female pastors in their community (Table 9). 3) The majority of women and men have heard a female preach (Table 10). 4) The majority of women and men had a positive response to a female preaching (Table 11). 5) The majority of females said that female preachers are an issue in the church and community, while at the same time, the majority of males said it was not an issue at all (Table 12). 6) The data reveals that the majority of women and men participants belong to churches that support female preachers (Table 13), but when asked in what ways does your church support women in ministry, lay people said: as guest speakers, assistants to the pastor, and Sunday School teachers; no one said as pastor of a local church. It is important to note that the participants attend churches that have never been pastored

by a female preacher. 7) A large percentage of female and male participants had discussed the issue of ordaining women (Table 14).

Section Three

Section three was designed to compare the attitudes of lay people toward female versus male preachers.

1) What are your images of male preachers?

Table 15: Images

Images	Pretest(T_1)	Post-test(T_2)	Change
	Female/Male	Female/Male	F/M
1. Stronger	38.5%(7) - 71.0%(5)	22.0%(4) - 71.0%(5)	-16.5%/0
2. Weak	27.5%(5) - 14.2%(1)	16.5%(3) - 14.2%(1)	-11.0%/0
3. Passive	38.5%(7) - 14.2%(1)	27.5%(5) - 14.2%(1)	-11.0%/0
4. Servant	55.0%(10)- 42.6%(3)	44.0%(8) - 56.8%(4)	-11.0%/14.2%
5. Angelic	22.0%(4) - 14.2%(1)	16.5%(3) - 14.2%(1)	-5.5%/0
6. God-like	49.5%(9) - 14.2%(1)	38.5%(7) - 14.2%(1)	-11.0%/0
7. God's voice	44.0%(8) - 28/4%(2)	33.0%(6) - 14.2%(1)	-11.0%/-14.5%
8. Shepherd	66.0%(12)- 42.6%(3)	44.0%(8) - 28.1%(2)	-22.0%/14.5%
9. Authority	44.0%(8) - 14.2%(1)	33.0%(6) - 28.1%(2)	-11.0%/0
10. Aggressive	49.0%(9) - 28.1%(2)	33.0%(6) - 28.1%(2)	-16.0%/0
11. Above all	16.5%(3) - 14.2%(1)	22.0%(4) - 28.1%(2)	5.5%/13.9%
12. Leaders	60.5%(11)- 85.2%(6)	66.0%(12)- 42.1%(3)	5.5%/-43.1%

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 15 shows the pretest and post-test responses of lay people by gender. The percentages were calculated by subtracting the number of responses from the total number of participants. For example, 18 women participated in the target group. Out of the 18 women, 7 of the women said they

believe male ministers are "strong images" (38.5%). Seven men participated in the target group. Out of the 7 men, 5 said they believe male ministers are "strong" (71.5%).

Table 15 shows between the pretest, learning workshops, and post-test a number of significant changes occurred: (1) Female participants viewed male preachers as strong on the pretest, but changed their opinion during the post-test (38.5% T_1, 22% T_2, and C = -16.5%). The change could have been attributed to the presentation of strong African-American women like Sojourner Truth during the learning workshop that simply made women seem as strong as men. (2) Female participants' image of male preachers as servants decreased during the post-test (T_1 = 55%, T_2 = 44%, C = 11%), while male participants' image of male preachers as servants increased (T_1 = 42.6%, T_2 = 56.8%, C = 14.2%). The change could be that female participants' image of servant changed when they were exposed to the sacrifices women made to serve God, while males may have increased their image of male preachers as servant because they may image Christ as a symbol of male servanthood. (3) Both males and female participants changed their opinion of images of male preacher as God's voice (male - T_1 = 28.4%, T_2 = 14.2%, C = -14.5%; female - T_1 = 44%, T_2 = 33%, C = -11%). This change may be attributed to the call stories of African-American men and women that revealed that women and men are used as God's voice. (4) Both female and male

participants changed their opinion of male preachers as shepherd (female - 66% T_1, 33% T_2, C = 22%; males 42.6% T_1, 28.1% T_2, C = 14.5%). Lay people might have changed their opinion about male preachers as shepherd after they experienced the workshops on Jesus and the struggles he faced caring for others. It could have made humans' job less demanding. (5) Female participants experienced a change in opinion from the pretest to the post-test concerning their images of male preachers as aggressive (49% T_1, 33% T_2, C = -16%). It might be that the call stories of females to the ministry revealed that aggression is a trait found in both male and female preachers. (6) Male participants experienced a change of opinion about male preachers being above all (14.2% T_1, 28.1% T_2, C = 13.9%). "Above all" means that the person perceives the pastor as someone who is elevated over all other humans. It is the belief that there is no higher ranking position in life than that of the pastor's office. Male participants may have felt uncomfortable with the strong female images and decided that male is the figure above all. (7) Male participants decreased their opinion of male preachers as Leaders by a very significant number (85.2% T_1, 42.1% T_2, C = -43.1%). This may be attributed to the presentation of strong female leaders from biblical days up until the present time during the learning workshops. They may have also been affected by the workshop leader's ability to give direction during the workshop.

2) What are your images of female preachers?

Table 16: Images of Female Preachers by Gender

	Pretest(T_1)	Post-test(T_2)	Change
Image	Female/Male	Female/Male	F/M
1. Strong	38.5%(7)/56.8%(4)	22.0%(4)/71%(5)	-16.5%/14.2%
2. Weak	27.5%(5)/14.2%(1)	16.5%(3)/14.2%(1)	-11.0%/0
3. Passive	27.5%(5)/14.2%(1)	33.0%(6)/14.2%(1)	- 5.5%/0
4. Servant	60.5%(11)/42.6%(3)	44.0%(8)/56.8(4)	-16.5%/14.2%
5. Angelic	27.5%(5)/14.2%(1)	22.0%(4)/14.2%(1)	- 5.5%/0
6. God-like	33.0%(6)/14.2%(1)	44.0%(8)/14.2%(1)	11.0%/0
7. God's Voice	44.0%(8)/28.1%(2)	33.0%(6)/28.1%(2)	11.0%/0
8. Shepherd	66.0%(12)/28.1%(2)	53.0%(10)/28.1%(2)	-13.0%/0
9. Authority	38.5%(7)/14.2%(1)	33.0%(6)/14.2%(1)	-3.3%/0
10. Aggressive	38.5%(7)/14.2%(1)	27.5%(5)/14.2%(1)	-11.0%/0
11. Above All	27.5%(5)/14.2%(1)	22.0%(4)/14.2%(1)	-5.5%/0
12. Leader	60.5%(11)/71%(5)	71.5%(13)/56.8%(4)	11.5%/-14.2%
Totals			

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 16 shows the response to the question, "What are your images of female preachers?". The following characteristics of female ministers received significant responses from the participants.

The first image is "strong." The male participants during the pretest (56.8%) and the post-test (71%) said female preachers are viewed as strong. Less than 40% of the female participants said women ministers have the image of being strong (T_1 38.5% - T_2 22%).

The men's perception of female preachers as strong increased after the workshops, while the women's perception

of female preachers as strong decreased. The male participants' perception may have increased because they were exposed to a number of powerful African-American female scholars, as well as preachers. Female participants may have decreased because of the negative images the Bible revealed of women; "The Woman at the Well." Maybe female participants have struggled so much that they see physical strength as being stronger than mental strength.

The second image that received a large response was "servant." Over 60% of the female participants during the pretest said that female preachers are seen as servant and 44% during the post-test. For males the percentages were 42.6% during the pretest and 56.8% during the post-test.

Female participants' images of female preachers as servant decreased between the pretest and the post-test, while male participants experienced an increase in their perception of female preachers as servant. The presentation of strong committed African-American women can be attributed to the change in male participants' increase perceptions of female ministers as servants. Female participants may perceive female preachers in other roles. Females may view "servant" as a negative term after the workshop and selected other terms that had no identity with terms relative to bondage.

The third image that female ministers received the highest overall response from both female and male partici-

pants was "leader." Over 60.5% of female participants during the pretest said women ministers were "leaders." Among the male participants 71% said female preachers are imaged as leaders and 56.8% during the post-test.

Female participants' perception of female preachers as leaders increased during the post-test while male perception of female preachers decreased. After the workshop maybe female participants viewed women preachers more as leaders, while males viewed them more as servants.

A summary of significant responses in section three of the questionnaire is as follows:

(1) Female participants viewed male preachers as strong on the pretest, but changed their opinion in the post-test (Table 15). (2) Female images of male preachers as servant decreased while male participants' perception increased (Table 15). (3) Both female and male participants decreased their opinion of male preachers as God's voice and shepherd between the pretest and post-test (Table 15). (4) Female participants' image of male preachers as aggressive decreased from the pretest to the post-test (Table 15). (5) Male participants experienced an increase in the opinion that male preachers are "Above All" (Table 15). (6) Male participants decreased their opinion of male preachers as leader by a very significant number (Table 15). (7) Male participants' perception of female preachers as strong increased after the workshop, while women participants'

images of female preachers as servant decreased while male participants' images increased (Table 16). (9) Female participants' perception of female preachers as leaders increased while male participants' perception decreased (Table 16).

Section Four

In section four of the questionnaire, lay people were asked to respond to five questions that reflect their opinions on issues in their local community and church:

1) How serious is the problem of racism in your community? Table 17 shows the response of lay people during the pretest and post-test.

Table 17: The Problem of Racism in Community

Problem of Racism	Pretest	Post-test	Change
Very Serious	16.7% (4)	33.3%(6)	16.6%
Not Serious	33.3% (8)	27.8%(5)	-5.5%
Serious	45.8%(11)	38.9%(7)	-6.9%
Not Serious At All	4.2% (1)		
Totals	24	18	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

During the pretest and post-test, the largest percentage of participants said that racism is a serious issue. Although the largest percentages said yes, racism is a serious issue, the second highest numbers in the pretest and

post-test said that racism is not so serious an issue in the community.

Table 17 shows that the number of respondents that view racism as a very serious problem increased (16.7% T_1, 33.3% T_2, C = 16.6%). A significant number of respondents had a change of opinion after the four learning workshops. The change may be attributed to the historical review of racism in church and society. At the same time participants' perception of racism as not so serious decreased (33.3% T_1, 27.8% T_2, C = -5.5%). The review of racist events in African-American history may be attributed to this change. It should also be noted that participants' view of racism as a serious problem decreased after the workshops (48.5% T_1, 38.9% T_2, C = -6.9%). Maybe some of the participants view racism as a very serious problem after the workshop, or viewed other community problems as more serious (drugs, Black on Black crime, teenage mothers).

(2) Is racism an issue your church is working on in your community?

Table 18: Church Working on Racism in Your Community

Church working on racism	T_1	T_2	Change
Much	4.2%(1)	11.8%(2)	7.6%
Very Little	37.5%(9)	41.2%(7)	3.7%
Somewhat	33.3%(8)	47.0%(8)	13.7%
Not at All	25.0%(6)		
Totals	24	17	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 18 shows that participants' perceptions about the church working on racism in the community changed (Much 4.2% T_1, 11.8% T_2, C = 7.6%; Very Little 37.5% T_1, 41.2% T_2, C = 3.7%; Somewhat 33.3% T_1, 47.0% T_2, C = 13.7%). The greatest percentage of change was that participants viewed the church as "somewhat" working on racism. The second highest percentage was "much" and the third was "very little." Maybe these increases happened because participants evaluated the church work differently after the workshop on racism. It is also important to note that 25% of the pre-test participants viewed the church as doing nothing at all in the community. None of the participants responded "not at all" during the post-test. Maybe the different example of how churches work against racism in communities changed the participants' perception.

3) How serious is the problem of sexism in your community?

Table 19: How Serious is Sexism in the Community?

Sexism in the Community	T_1	T_2	Change
Very Serious	18.2%(4)	16.7%(3)	-1.5%
Not So Serious	36.4%(8)	33.3%(6)	-3.1%
Serious	31.8%(7)	44.4%(8)	12.6%
Not Serious At All	13.6%(3)	5.6%(1)	-8.0%
Totals	22	18	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 19 shows that participants' perception of sexism as a serious problem in the community changed (31.8% T_1, 44.4% T_2, C = 12.6%). After the workshop, more participants' viewed sexism as a serious problem in the community. At the same time participants who responded "not serious at all" during the pretest (13.6%) decreased during the post-test (5.6%). It may be that exposing lay people to the pain of sexism that female preachers experience in the ministry was connected with the pain of racism that African-Americans experience daily.

4) Is sexism an issue your church is working on in your community?

Table 20: Sexism an Issue Church is Working on in Community

Sexism an Issue Church is Working on in Community	(T_1)	(T_2)	Change
Much	13.6%(3)	16.7%(3)	3.1%
Very Little	40.9%(9)	38.9%(7)	-2.0%
Somewhat	27.3%(6)	33.3%(6)	6.0%
Not At All	18.2%(4)	11.1%(2)	-7.1%
Totals	22	18	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 20 shows that the largest number of participants on the pretest (40.9%) and post-test (38.9%) said that very little is being done by churches in the community to work on sexism. The participants increased their view that the church is doing "much" (13.6% T_1, 16.7% T_2, C = 3.1%), or "somewhat" (27.3% T_1, 33.3% T_2, C = 6.0%) to work on sexism in the community. It should also be acknowledged that participants decreased their responses to "very little" (40.9% T_1, 38.9% T_2, C = -2%), and "not at all" (18.2% T_1, 11.1% T_2, C = -7.1%). Participants could have viewed this workshop as a means for the church to work on sexism in the community.

5) Name three issues that your church and community should be working on.

This was the last question for this section. Many of the lay people named issues that were unique to their

communities. On the pretest, participants named over 25 issues the church and community should be working on. Three issues that were mentioned most were racism, sexism and teenage pregnancy. During the post-test, over 27 issues were raised that the church and community should be working on. Four of the issues raised a number of times were racism, sexism, youth violence and teenage pregnancy.

A summary of section four of the questionnaire shows the following results:

(1) The majority of the lay people in the pretest and post-test said racism was a serious issue (Table 17).

2) The majority of the lay people agreed that very little is being done by the churches to combat racism in the community during the pretest. The post-test shows the largest number said that the churches are somewhat working against racism in the community (Table 18).

3) After the workshops more participants viewed sexism as a serious problem in the community (Table 19).

4) The largest number of participants in the pretest and post-test said that very little is being done to combat sexism in the community by the church (Table 20).

5) The three major issues that the community and the church should be working on are racism, sexism, and teenage pregnancy.

Section Five

Section five of the questionnaire was designed to

test the participants' personal knowledge. The lay people were asked to respond to 13 questions in this section. Only the questions that received significant responses are listed.

1) Have you read Galatians 3:28?

Table 21: Have You Read Galatians 3:28?

Read Galatians 3:28	T_1	T_2	Change
Yes	78%(18)	95.0%(19)	17.0%
No	22% (5)	5.0% (1)	-16.0%
No Response			
Totals	23	20	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 21 shows that the majority of the participants in the pretest and post-test have read Galatians 3:28. Participants were exposed to Galatians 3:28 during the fourth workshop.

2) Who has helped you in understanding or interpreting the role of women in the church?

Table 22: Who Helped You With Women Church Roles?

Who Helped with Women Church Roles	T_1	T_2	Change
Clergy	35.5%(5)	46.2%(6)	10.5%
Family Member	14.5%(2)		
UBC Women	14.5%(2)		
Myself	35.5%(5)		
Reverend Rouser/ workshop		53.8%(7)	53.8%
Totals	14	13	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 22 shows that 44% of the target group did not respond to the question. During the pretest 56% of the lay people responded. Out of the 56% of lay people, 35.5% said a clergy person had helped them with the role of women in the church, 14.5% said family member, 14.5% said United Black Christians (UBC) women, and 35.5% said they helped themselves. During the post-test only 52% of the lay people responded. Over 46.2% of the people said the pastor had helped them with the role of women in the church and the other 53.8% said that Reverend Rouser and the workshop helped them. It is significant to note that more participants viewed their pastor as the person who helped with the role of women in the church before the workshops than after. Maybe people connected some of their beliefs about women to that of their pastor. It is also significant that none of

the participants viewed Rev. Rouser as one who helped with women's roles in the church until after the workshop. Participants' perception might have changed toward Rev. Rouser because she was an example of a female in the ministry (pastor of local church and workshop leader).

3) In your opinion, what is the role of a woman in the church?

Table 23: What is a Woman's Church Role?

Woman's Church Role	T_1	T_2	Change
Anything - unlimited	38%(5)	40%(4)	2.0%
Same as a man	8%(1)	20%(2)	12.0%
Serve God	23%(3)	20%(2)	-3.0%
Lead and preach	31%(4)	20%(2)	-11,0%
Totals	13	10	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 23 shows that of the 13 participants responding during the pretest; the largest percentage (38%) said women should be unlimited in their role in the church.

4) Would you please look over this list and tell me which items, if any, you have heard something about.

Womanist Theology Afrocentricity

Liberation Theology Inclusive Language

Androcentric Feminist Theology

Tables 24-29 show the participant's response to each

term.

Table 24: Womanist Theology

Heard about Womanist Theology	T_1	T_2	Change
Don't know - unfamiliar	57.9%(11)		
Know about - familiar	42.1% (8)	100%(22)	57.9%
Totals	19	22	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 24 shows the participants' response to womanist theology. Most of the participants were unfamiliar with the term during the pretest, but the post-test shows that 100% of the respondents were familiar with the term after the workshop.

Table 25: Liberation Theology

Heard of Liberation Theology	T_1	T_2	Change
Don't know - unfamiliar	63.2%(12)	4.6% (1)	-58.6%
Know about - familiar	36.8% (7)	95.4%(22)	58.6%
Totals	19	23	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 25 reveals lay people's response to liberation theology. The majority of participants were not familiar with the term during the pretest, but the post-test shows after the workshop that 95.4% of the participants were

familiar with liberation theology.

Table 26: Androcentric Thought

Heard of Androcentric	T_1	T_2	Change
Don't know - unfamiliar	63.2%(12)	4.6% (1)	-58.6%
Know about - familiar	36.8% (7)	95.4%(21)	58.6%
Totals	19	22	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 26 shows the participants' response to androcentric thought. Most of the participants were unfamiliar with the term during the pretest, but post-test results reveal that over 95.4% of the participants were familiar after the workshops.

Table 27: Afrocentricity

Heard of Afrocentricity	T_1	T_2	Change
Don't know - unfamiliar	31.6% (6)	4.5% (1)	-27.1%
Know about - familiar	68.4%(13)	95.5%(21)	27.1%
Totals	19	22	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 27 shows the response of participants to afrocentricity. The pretest data reveals that more than 68.4% of the participants were familiar with the term. The post-test shows that 95.5% were familiar after the work-

shop.

Table 28: Inclusive Language

Heard of Inclusive Language	T_1	T_2	Change
Don't know - unfamiliar	47.4% (9)	4.5% (1)	-42.9%
Know about - familiar	52.6%(10)	95.5%(21)	42.9%
Totals	19	22	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 28 reveals the participants' response to inclusive language. The pretest shows that a little over half (52.6%) of the participants had heard the term, and the post-test shows that 95.5% were familiar with the term after the workshop.

Table 29: Feminist Theology

Heard of Feminist Theology	T_1	T_2	Change
Don't know - unfamiliar	57.9%(11)	4.5% (1)	-53.4%
Know about - familiar	42.1% (8)	95.5%(21)	53.4%
Totals	19	22	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 29 shows the participants' response to feminist theology. The pretest reveals that 42.1% of the participants were familiar with feminist theology, and the

post-test reveals 95.5% were familiar with the term after the workshop.

5) Would you please look over this list and tell me which of these names, if any, you have heard of. Table 30 shows the results.

Table 30: Names People Have Heard Of

Names Heard Something About	Pretest	Post-test	Change
Jacquelyn Grant			
Familiar	17% (4)	73%(16)	56%
Unfamiliar	83%(19)	27% (6)	-56%
Clarice Martin			
Familiar	4% (1)	68%(15)	64%
Unfamiliar	96%(22)	32% (7)	-64%
Renita Williams			
Familiar	13% (3)	68%(15)	55%
Unfamiliar	87%(20)	32% (7)	-55%
Delores Carpenter			
Familiar	22% (5)	68%(15)	46%
Unfamiliar	78%(18)	32% (7)	-46%
Bernice Powell			
Familiar	83%(19)	86%(19)	3%
Unfamiliar	17% (4)	14% (3)	-3%
Ben Chavis			
Familiar	100%(23)	100%(22)	0
Unfamiliar	(0)	(0)	0
William Myers			
Familiar	13% (3)	64%(14)	51%
Unfamiliar	87%(20)	36% (8)	-51%
Yvonne Delk			
Familiar	96%(22)	100%(23)	4%
Unfamiliar	4% (1)	(0)	-4%
Cain Hope Felder			
Familiar	13% (3)	62%(13)	49%
Unfamiliar	87%(20)	38% (9)	-49%
Jeremiah Wright			
Familiar	83%(19)	86%(19)	3%
Unfamiliar	17% (4)	14% (3)	-3%

Table 30 only lists the number of people who responded to the question in the pretest and post-test. The target group consists of 25 people. The findings from Table 30 show that Bernice Powell, Ben Chavis, Yvonne Delk and Jeremiah Wright are persons that are recognized by the majority of participants during the pretest and post-test. These people are probably familiar to the participants because they were all members of the United Church of Christ and are very active within the National Church setting. Also, Yvonne Delk and Ben chavis are products of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The findings also show from Table 30 that the majority of the participants were unfamiliar with the rest of the names; but, after the post-test, familiarity increased significantly. Most of the names listed in Table 30 are persons who have written on the subjects listed in Tables 24-29.

6) Here are a list of books -- Please tell me which books you are familiar with:

God's Yes is Louder Than My No(Myers)
A White Woman's Christ, A Black Woman's Jesus(Grant)
Stony The Road We Trod(ed. Felder)
Just a Sister Away. A Womanist Vision
of Women's Relationship in the Bible(Weens)

Table 31: Shows the People's Response

Books	Pretest	Post-test	Change
God's Yes is Louder Than My No			
Familiar	20%(2)	93%(13)	73%
Unfamiliar	80%(8)	7% (1)	-73%
White Woman's Christ A Black Woman's Jesus			
Familiar	10%(1)	71%(10)	61%
Unfamiliar	90%(9)	29% (4)	-61%
Stony the Road We Trod			
Familiar	30%(3)	64%(9)	34%
Unfamiliar	70%(7)	36%(5)	-34%
Just a Sister Away			
Familiar	40%(4)	71%(10)	31%
Unfamiliar	60%(6)	29% (4)	-31%

Table 31 shows that most of the participants were unfamiliar with these books at the time of the pretest. However, by the post-test familiarity with these books had increased dramatically..

The following is a summary of section five of the questionnaire.

1) Most of the participants had read Galatians 3:28 (Table 21).

2) More people were helped to understand the role of women in the church by this workshop than by pastors. Although these results seem to be significant, less than half of the test group responded to the post-test question (Table 22).

3) Respondents suggest that women should have leadership role in the church (Table 23).

4) Most people were unfamiliar with important liberation terms, but were very familiar with the terms after the workshops (Tables 24-29).

5) Most of the participants said they were unfamiliar with the names of people listed. However, they were familiar with all of the people who were members of the United Church of Christ. After the workshops participants were familiar with other names as well (Table 30).

7) The participants were not familiar with the books, but after the workshops they were familiar (Table 31).

Section Six

Section six consists of five questions. Each participant was instructed to place an X on a continuum at the point which best describes their opinion.

Question 1: Is the appearance, voice, or manner of a female preacher a distraction to the hearer and a distraction from the sermon? Is it a factor which has little or no effect on the sermon, or does it greatly enhance the sermon?

Table 32: Does Female Preacher Enhance Sermon?

Value Label	T_1	T_2	Change
Distracts hearers	11.1%(2)		
Has Little or No Effect	38.9%(7)	40.0%(6)	1.1%
Greatly Enhances	50.0%(9)	60.0%(9)	10.0%
Totals	18	15	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 32 shows that most of the people said female preachers greatly enhance the sermon (pretest 50%, post-test 60%). A small number of people said that female preachers distract hearers from the sermon (pretest 11%, post-test 0%). Almost 40% of the people said it has little or no effect on the sermon (the voice, appearance, manners of the female preacher). It is significant to acknowledge that participants increased their perception that female preachers "greatly enhance" the sermon by 10% during the post-test. Maybe the workshop leader's voice helped participants to be enhanced.

Question 2: The appearance, voice, or manner of the female preacher: a) is more effective than that of the male preacher, b) is equally effective to that of the male preacher, c) is less effective than that of the male preacher.

Table 33: Female Preachers Effective Compared to Male

Value Label	T_1	T_2	Change
Is More Effective	16.7% (3)		
Is Equally Effective	83.3%(15)	84.6%(11)	1.3%
Is Less Effective		15.4% (2)	15.4%
Totals	18	13	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 33 shows that most of the participants believe the appearance, voice or manner of a female preacher is equally as effective as a male preacher (pretest 83.3%, post-test 84.6%). There was also a significant change in those participants who viewed female preachers as "less effective." Before the workshop no one responded "less effective;" after the workshop, 15.4% of the participants response was "less effective." This could be attributed to some of the participants who do not believe women should preach, or maybe their experiences with women preachers have not been enhancing.

Question 3: Authority assumed by the listeners to

be present in the preacher - A) Is much greater for the male than the female preacher, B) Is equally effective to that of a male preacher, C) Is much greater for the female than the male preacher.

Table 34: The Female Preacher Authority Compared to Males

Value Label	T_1	T_2	Change
Much Greater for Male	16.7% (3)	6.7% (1)	-10.0%
Equally Effective with Male	72.2%(13)	80.0% (12)	7.8%
Much Greater for Female	11.1% (2)	13.3% (2)	2.2%
Totals	18	15	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 34 shows that most participants said that the authority assumed by the listeners to be present in the preacher is equally effective to that of a male preacher (pretest 72.2%, post-test 80%). It is important to acknowledge that the majority of the participants viewed female preachers' authority as equally effective as that of male preachers before the learning workshops, although the percentages increased (C = 7.8%) after the post-test. It is also important to acknowledge that respondents experienced a decrease in the perception that authority is "much greater for males" (16.7% T_1, 6.7% T_2, C = -10.0%, while participants experienced an increase in the perception that authority is "much greater for females" after they completed the

four learning workshops (11.1% T_1, 13.3% T_2, C = 2.2%). The results show that participants viewed authority of male preachers a little less, while participants viewed female preachers' authority as greater. Again, maybe some of the images of African-American female preachers and theologians during the presentation affected the change in participants' perceptions of male and female preachers.

Question 4: In light of church history, the Bible and social images, to what extent do congregations accept women in the role of preacher today? A) absolute rejection, B) moderate acceptance, C) complete acceptance.

Table 35: Extent Congregations Accept Women Preachers

Value Label	T_1	T_2	Change
Absolute Rejection	5.3% (1)	7.7%(1)	2.4%
Moderate Acceptance	84.2%(16)	69.2%(9)	-15.0%
Complete Acceptance	10.5% (2)	23.1%(3)	12.6%
Totals	19	19	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 35 shows that the majority of the participants believe that congregations today moderately accept female preachers (pretest 84.2%, post-test 69.2%). It is significant to point out that more of the participants said congregations moderately accepted female preachers before the learning workshops than after. The respondents also experi-

enced an increase in the viewpoint that female preachers are absolutely rejected by congregations (5.3% T_1, 7.7% T_2, C = 2.4%), and female preachers are completely accepted by congregations (10.5% T_1, 23.1% T_2, C = 12.6%). Some of the participants that viewed women as moderately accepted by congregations may have changed their perception to completely accepted by the congregation, while a few more participants viewed the congregation as absolutely rejecting female preachers. Maybe the presentations of the struggles female preachers face in the ordained ministry durng the workshops caused the respondents to change their perception of congregation acceptance.

Question 5: In light of church history, the Bible, and social images, to what extent do congregations accept a man in the role of preacher today? A) absolute rejection, B) moderate acceptance, C) complete acceptance.

Table 36: Extent Congregation Accepts Men Preachers

Value Label	T_1	T_2	Change
Absolute Rejection		20.8%(3)	
Moderate Acceptance	47.1%(8)	39.6%(6)	-7.5%
Complete Acceptance	52.9%(9)	39.6%(6)	-13.3%
Totals	17	15	

Note: The figures in parentheses are frequencies numbers for the adjacent percentages.

Table 36 shows the results of the extent congregations accept men preachers. The majority of the partici-

pants during the pretest said congregations completely accept men preachers (52.9%); after the learning workshops the percentage of participants' perception dropped (39.6% T_2). It may be attributed to the fewer number of participants responding to the post-test questionnaire, or maybe before the learning workshops participants viewed male preachers as the only option for the local congregation. It should also be noted that before the learning workshops no one responded that congregations absolutely reject male preachers, but after the learning workshops 20.8% of the post-test respondents said congregations absolutely reject male preachers. Participants might have evaluated their own male pastor by the strengths of the powerful female preachers in the presentation during the workshops and decided if given a choice, they would absolutely reject the male for the female.

A summary of section six of the questionnaire is as follows:

1) Most of the participants said a female preacher greatly enhances the sermon by their appearance, voice and manner.

2) A majority of the participants said that the appearance, voice or manner of a female preacher is equally effective as that of a male preacher.

3) The authority assumed by the listeners to be present in the preacher is equally effective for a female

and male.

4) Most of the participants said that female preachers are moderately accepted.

5) The majority of the participants said male preachers are completely accepted.

The results and evaluations of the data imply some very appropriate suggestions concerning the importance of educating lay people in the local church. Such findings will serve as a significant foundation for drawing conclusions and providing directions and recommendations for future educational training events for lay people.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the pretest and post-test data indicates that African-American lay people in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ experienced some significant changes in knowledge, attitudes, and actions toward women in ordained ministry.

Section one describes the demographics of the test group. It is suggested that the research is based on a representative group of lay people within the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. These observations are based on information from Tables 1-6.

1) Participants came from each of the age groups.

2) Although the majority of participants were women, it suggests that this group is representative of the local church context. Most local churches have twice the number of women than men. The study group consisted of 18 females and 7 males.

3) Participants represented every category in the marital status scale (12 married, 1 separated, 4 divorced, 5 never married, and 3 unknown).

4) Most of the African-American lay people have had some college level experiences. The results reveal that

there is a wide spectrum of educational experiences in the test group (3 High School, 1 GED, 5 High School graduates, 7 some college, 4 master degree, 1 higher than master, and 2 unknown).

5) The employment status of the group consisted of four types (12 full-time, 2 part-time, 9 retired, and 2 unknown).

6) Although the majority of the participants have been attending church for over 21 years, some have been attending church for a shorter length of time. Seventeen participants have been attending church over 21 years, while 5 have been attending church less than 10 years. Two of the participants have been attending church between 16-20 years, and one from 11-15 years. This group represents a wide range of church attendance.

These observations imply that the participants represent a diverse range of experiences; therefore, it is most likely that this group is a representation of a larger group of African-American lay people within the United Church of Christ. Thus the results of the study can be considered to be representative of lay people in general and the insights for ministry worth considering.

Section two of the questionnaire reveals participants' personal awareness of women in ministry.

The results show that the majority of lay people were familiar with female preachers in their church and

community. Although most participants said that their church supports women in ministry, not one of the participants attend a church that has ever had a female pastor. Most of the congregations support female ministers by allowing them to be guest speakers, assistants to the pastor, or Sunday School teachers. It is important to note that the female participants considered female preachers an issue in the church and community, while the majority of male participants said it was not an issue at all.

These results suggest that lay people can be aware of female preachers and support them as long as they are not pastors of their local churches.

Section three of the questionnaire compares the attitudes of lay people toward female versus male preachers. Tables 15 and 16 contain the data.

1) Female participants changed their views of male preachers as strong, servant, God's voice, and aggressive during the post-test. Male participants changed their views of male preachers as servant, God's voice, above all, and leaders during the post-test. After the four learning workshops female participants viewed male preachers differently. They viewed male preachers as not so strong, less of a servant, less of God's voice and not so aggressive. At the same time, male participants viewed male preachers after the workshop as less of God's voice, less of a shepherd, and a significant number said less of a leader. Male partici-

pants increased their views of male preachers as servants and "above all."

2) Male participants' perception of female preachers as strong and servant increased after the workshops while male participants' perception of female preachers as leaders decreased. Female participants decreased their perception of female preachers as strong and servant while increasing their perception of female preachers as leaders.

The pretest and post-test data certainly suggest that the changes in the participants' responses can be attributed to the four learning workshops, therefore, it seems that learning experiences like this can be effective tools in influencing the perception of participants.

Section four of the questionnaire reveals participants' opinions about issues in the community. Tables 17-20 contain this data.

1) The majority of lay people in the pretest and post-test said racism was a serious issue, but little is being done to combat it.

2) After the workshops more participants viewed sexism as a serious problem in the community, but said very little is being done.

3) It is the participants' opinion that the three major issues for the community are racism, sexism, and teenage pregnancy. The data from this section suggest that learning opportunities like this can be a helpful tool to

raise the participants' consciousness concerning issues in the community.

Section five of the questionnaire was designed to test the participants' personal knowledge. Tables 21-31 reflect the participants' responses.

1) Most of the participants read Galatians 3:28.

2) More people were helped by the four learning workshops than they were helped by their pastors to understand the role of women in the church after the post-test.

3) Most of the participants were unfamiliar with important liberation terms, African-American theologians, and Afrocentric books before the workshops. The majority of the participants gained knowledge of terms, theologians, and Afrocentric books after the workshops.

A review of the data from the pretest and post-test will reveal that participants gained a tremendous amount of knowledge during the four learning experiences. Therefore, this experience may be helpful in educating lay people on other important issues of the church and community.

Section six of the questionnaire asked the participants to rate a female preacher. Tables 32-36 show the responses of the participants.

1) Most of the participants said female preachers greatly enhanced the sermon by their appearance, voice, and manner. Participants said female preachers are equally as effective as male preachers.

2) The authority assumed by the listeners to be present in the preacher is equally effective for a female and a male.

3) Most of the participants said that male preachers are completely accepted, while female preachers are moderately accepted.

An analysis of the pretest and post-test results indicate that African-American women within the United Church of Christ continue to be victimized by sexist thoughts in the local church context. The results of this section reveal that African-American male preachers continue to benefit from a system that is non-racist but ultra sexist.

This insightful information indicates that this model is needed to continue to break down the wall of sexism in the church. The results of the study indicate the need for replication of this model of ministry as a useful tool to educate lay people on the issue that surrounds the ordination of women.

While there were only 25 lay people included in this study, it is believed that the implementation of this learning model will reap great benefits. This model is not only useful to the United Church of Christ, but if embraced, the minds of lay people can be transformed universally.

Through the implementation of this model of ministry, we have learned that an Afrocentric biblical hermeneu-

tical tool that educates African-American lay people on the propriety of ordaining women can be beneficial for the whole church in destroying the walls of sexism in the local church context. Most lay people exposed to the learning module experienced a change in knowledge, and attitude. Lay people became very sensitive to sexism when it was compared to racism, so it may also be possible that their actions will be changed.

Secondly, we learned that not all lay people were changed during this learning experience. Although most laity in the test group support the ministry of women, there were those who went through the process unchanged. A small matter, but it suggests that no matter how good your project is, it will not change everyone.

For future studies, the model should explore the possibilities of developing a component for seminary students to sensitize male pastors on the issue of women in ministry. Also, the United Church of Christ can possibly use the model in the context of the local church as a resource, association workshops, at annual conferences and national meetings. Future studies can also pursue a component that would be used in society to eliminate sexism universally.

The lay people participating in this study were all members of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. This study might have been strengthened by the

inclusion of African-American laity from all the conferences across the church. Maybe African-American laity in other areas of the church would have revealed a wider spectrum of findings. The model of ministry could be further tested with the inclusion of African-American laity from ecumenical settings.

One of the troublesome areas of the model of ministry was the pretest and post-test questionnaire. It was too long and therefore lay people left a lot of questions unanswered. For future studies a new measuring instrument should be developed to assure a higher percentage of responses.

During the process of the implementation of this model of ministry several things happened to me. Personally, I sensed a need for more training opportunities for lay people. Second, I sensed how effective and useful training lay people could be for the empowerment of women in the local church. Finally, I sensed a personal internal healing because 25 lay people had been exposed to the pain of women in ministry in the local church because of sexism.

The focus of this project has been to develop a tool that would educate African-American lay people on the propriety of ordaining women. Our aim was that lay people become more sensitive to the sin of sexism and attempt to destroy its walls and empower women to be leaders in the local church context. We exit this study with hope that

rises out of the mouth of the Womanist theologian who speaks the truth from the depth of racism, sexism, and classism. The Black woman who has been isolated and oppressed. The woman who is penalized for being Black, female, and poor. The Womanist is a victim of sexism and bears the painful bruises of church and society which disenfranchises women daily.

APPENDIX A

CANDIDACY REVIEW DOCUMENT

APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY REVIEW

Name Leticia Rouser

Context in Ministry Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ

Mentor(s) Dr. Clarice Martin and Dr. William Myers

Phase I and Phase II Papers submitted to Doctor of Ministry Office ___X___ Yes__No_

Working title for project: Ordaining Women In Ministry: An Afrocentric Biblical Training Model For Lay People In The Southern Conference Of The United Church Of Christ

Summary of model-in-ministry project:

This Afrocentric Biblical Hermeneutic will focus on educating African-American lay people in the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ to accept women in ordained ministry. Three sites have been selected for testing:

(1) July 3-7, 1994 during "Faith Works" in Lafayette, Indiana

(2) July 20-23, 1994 during United Black Christians in Detroit, Michigan

(3) October of 1994, in the Southern Conference

Summary of methodology for designing, implementing and evaluating the model-in-ministry project:

The Afrocentric Biblical Hermeneutic Model shall consist of three components:

(1) A Pre-Test - This component will measure the participant's knowledge, attitudes, and actions toward women in ordained ministry.

(2) A Learning Module - The second component will allow the participant to hear lectures on Pauline texts from a Womanist perspective and participate in an open discussion with peers and lecturer.

(3) Post-Test - This component will test the changes if any in the participant's knowledge, attitudes, and actions toward women in ordained ministry.

UTS faculty and other experts (including your mentor, peer seminar facilitator and consultant team) consulted during your Doctor of Ministry program. List name, qualifications and one sentence statement of purpose for each consultation:

NAME	QUALIFICATION	PURPOSE FOR CONSULTATION
Dr. Clarice Martin The Divinity School Rochester, NY	Ph.D., New Testament	Mentor
Dr. William Myers Ashland Theological Seminary Middleburg, OH	Ph.D., New Testament	Mentor
Rev. Elaine Flake Allen A.M.E. Jamaica, NY	Master of Divinity	Peer
Dr. Jacquelyn Grant Interdenominational Theological Center Atlanta, GA	Ph.D., Theology	Expert in Women's Studies
Dr. Molefi Kete Asante Afrocentric Studies Temple University Philadelphia, PA	Ph.D., Theology	Expert in African Studies
Dr. Renita Weems Women's Studies Vanderbilt Divinity School Nashville, TN	Ph.D., Old Testament	Expert in Women's Studies
Dr. Sharon Dowd Lexington Theological Seminary Lexington, KY	Ph.D., New Testament	Textual Expert

FACULTY RESPONSE:

PHASE I - ANALYSIS: CONTEXTUAL PARTICIPANT

A. Self Description

As a single 36 year old African-American female within the United Church of Christ, I was born into a large family with strong spiritual and communal commitments. I am the product of my family, church, and community, strongly reinforced by an ecumenical spirit that reaches out to the wider church saying "Let us African-American Women Be Free" to do ministry.

Born July 10, 1957 on a Wednesday morning at 10:55 a.m. into a family of four sisters, five brothers, and my parents. This environment gave me the foundation of sharing and cooperating with others.

Suspicious of Higher Power

At the age of three I experienced my first awakening experience. The large two story house that I lived in was destroyed by fire. In all of the excitement my parents thought that everyone had gotten out of the house safely, but soon they realized that my baby brother was asleep in one of the upstairs bedrooms. My mother became frantic, started screaming and running toward our burning house, but the fireman said, "I'm sorry but you can't go in, there's almost nothing left." Somehow, the fireman climbed through the front window and rescued my

eighteen month old brother. At the age of three, I realized then that there was somebody more powerful than my parents.

Recognized Uniqueness

We moved to a house on Benjamin Street and attended the Lutheran Church in the neighborhood. Even though my parents were faithful Baptists it was easier to take the kids around the corner rather than across town. My parents allowed us to be active in the Lutheran Church. At the age of four I began to experience a strange phenomenon; I began to see visions and spirits that I was unable to explain to my parents. I would wake up in the night in cold sweats screaming for dear life. My parents always comforted me by allowing me to sleep with them. These events continued to happen and my parents did not understand them. I was able to identify the person that was chasing me through the house. When I described the women, the neighbors stated that I had seen a spirit because the woman that I described had been dead for five years. The wrestling with the spirit continued until my parents decided to move out of the house. When we moved, I no longer had visions, dreams, or nightmares about this woman.

An Ecumenical Spirit

At the age of six, I became an active member of the Catholic Church in my neighborhood. I attended catechism from ages six through twelve. Even though my status changed as a floater, I was baptized at the Greater St. Stephen's Baptist Church; I was still a devout Catholic.

A Person of Strong Conviction and Prayer

At the age of nine I began to struggle with my pastor's sermons. I remember going to church one Sunday and hearing my pastor preach the sermon, "God Can Do Anything But Fail." I was tested on that sermon for the next six months. When I was in the fourth grade my teacher loved me and allowed me to become the "teacher's pet." Yes, I was the one who wrote the names on the board when the teacher left the room.

One day my teacher left the room and assigned me to write the names of the children on the board who talked. A boy named Bernard Handy was in my class. He talked so much while the teacher was gone that I put three marks next to his name. When the teacher returned, she told him he would serve a detention for each mark. Bernard became angry and stated he would beat me up after class. He was not able to beat me up that day because my older sister was dismissed from school early and decided to visit her former teacher. She stopped by my class and walked home with me, so I escaped Bernard's wrath for a day.

The next day Bernard came to school and informed me that he was going to rape me. He had asked his twin brother and a cousin in the seventh grade to help him to carry out his mission. When he told me of his plan, I was terrified. I ran home from school because they were chasing me.

When I arrived home I took a piece of paper and wrote "my prayer corner" on it. I taped the paper between the chair and the sofa. I prayed there for the next six months. Over and over I could hear the pastor's sermon, "God Can Do

Anything But Fail." I prayed and I prayed. Sometimes I prayed all night long. It was nothing for my parents to find me sleeping in the corner because I was waiting for a word from the Lord.

For the next six months Bernard cut school in order to rape me. He would always show up about 3:10 p.m. each day, but I always thought of an excuse to escape his plans. I remember many days I would ask the teacher for a pass to the restroom. I literally stayed in the toilet with my feet up on the commode so if anybody came in they would not know I was there. Sometimes, I would spend three hours in that position. Many times the school would be locked up, and I would climb over the locked iron gate to get out.

Every day I prayed and continued to wait on a word from God. I did not have peace, even on my days off from school. I remember Bernard and his associates hiding under the house next door waiting for me. I told no one but God.

Finally the day arrived, Bernard Handy decided to come to school for a whole day. He watched me all day from the other side of the room. I cried all day as he watched me. At 3:15 p.m. when the bell rang he ran out the door. I knew he was going to catch me that day because I refused to run anymore. I was so angry with God that I began to cry aloud, " God I'm tired of running, why can't you stop him? I'm just going to be raped today because I'm not running anymore. I'm just plain tired. You told me you would never fail me. Why can't you move this?" All of a sudden out of nowhere came this

voice saying " Look behind you; there is no one following you." I was shocked; I

turned immediately, and for the first time in six months there was no one chasing me. It was the first time God had spoken to me vocally, but certainly not the last.

Woman of Great Faith

The next time God spoke to me I was eighteen years old, preparing to go to college. I was unaware of the process for enrollment, so I did not complete the necessary financial aid forms. I applied to my dream school, Xavier University in New Orleans. The office was late notifying me of my acceptance. They called me the week of freshman orientation. I arrived on campus and registered in my required courses. After I completed this process, I was faced with a bill. I was told to make my check payable to Xavier University for $750.00. I thought about the night before, when my pastor had offered me a blank check and told me to fill it out for whatever amount my bill added up to. I told him that God opened this door, and my faith tells me that God will make a way for me to pay. I immediately removed myself from the account payable line and went in the inner yard of the campus to pray. There God spoke the name Johnson to me. God told me to go to the second floor of the Administrative Building and tell this man Johnson my situation, and he would give me all I needed.

It felt strange going to a place and talking to a man I knew nothing about. I had never been on the campus before this day other than to take a test. When I arrived on the second floor, just as the voice stated there was a man named Johnson. Mr. Johnson's secretary asked me if I had an appointment, I said, "no" but somehow Mr. Johnson came out at that moment and told me to come

around and take a seat. At the end of conversation, I had a $2,000.00 academic scholarship, $1,600.00 emergency grant, and $2000.00 of work study for the school year. When I walked out of that office I knew that it was God alone who provided for me. At this time in my life, I was Apostolic. I didn't wear pants, make-up or jewelry. I was still a member of the Baptist Church, but I had joined a group of students and attended the Pentecostal and Assembly of God Churches. I was claiming everything in Jesus' name.

Woman of Constant Struggle

In 1980 after graduation from college, I felt God calling me into the ministry. I went to my Baptist pastor and told him that God had called me to preach. He said, "God doesn't call women, go and sit down." I waited for the next three years until I went through a life and death situation. I bargained for life and told God that I would do anything God told me to do.

In 1983, I received the call to preach again. The same pastor informed me that God does not call women and that the road will be rough... because there is no one before me. He stated that people will walk on me like people walk on sidewalks because the road I was paving was so new.

On January 8, 1984, I preached my trial sermon to over a thousand people after a Baptist Training Union. I thought I had overcome the largest hurdle in my life, but little did I know the stormy road was just ahead.

My pastor began to receive complaints from his colleagues about having a woman sit in the pulpit, thus a struggle began between the two of us. He wanted

me to sit on the front row and be called a Missionary. I said, "No, I'm sitting with the ministers." He told me he would call me down from the pulpit in front of 3500 people. I called a meeting with the deacons and told them what he said. The deacons told me that I could sit in the pulpit, but I couldn't say anything. After that Sunday, I sat on the row with the deacons and prayed for the next six months.

Meanwhile, I received a call to preach at Beecher United Church of Christ. I vaguely remember that this church supported women preachers from a brief encounter in 1980.

I was welcomed as a visiting preacher at Beecher and soon developed a supportive relationship with Pastor Brandon. He became my sounding board when things got rough at the Baptist Church. He also encouraged me during those six months to stay with my church and pray for a move of God to happen. I did just what he said and in June of 1984 my pastor invited me to share the pulpit with the male ministers as an equal.

Woman of Great Endurance

In March of 1984, I enrolled in the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and endured harsh sexual comments from my male peers about the place of women. My professors never apologized for these statements, they simply let me know that I was out of place.

With all these struggles going on in my life, I was called to be the Assistant Pastor of Beecher Memorial United Church of Christ. I gladly accepted the

challenge, but by no means was I going to close the front door for women in ministry at the Baptist Church. I made it a point to participate in the 8:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. services at the Baptist Church while serving in the 11:00 a.m. at the Beecher United Church of Christ. After about 18 months, three more women were called to ministry in the Baptist Church, since then, over 50 women have been called to preach.

For a year, I served the Baptist Church on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and two services on Sunday. I served the United Church of Christ on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and one service on Sunday. I attended classes on Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. I worked as a short order cook and a salad maker from 5:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. in the seminary's cafeteria. I also worked as a Title I teacher for the New Orleans public schools, teaching math and a reading at Methodist Home for abused children from 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. After a year of this schedule I suffered a burnout. I decided to do one church, one job, and school. I dedicated my services to the United Church of Christ. I worked as the Title I teacher and focused on my class work.

A Woman in Search of Freedom

Although I was working in the United Church of Christ, I discovered that many local churches had not experienced female pastors, in particular African American female pastors. The national church proclaimed to be open and affirming of women, but the conference, association and local church did not reflect this

affirmation. I realized that I was the only female in our association and the only African American pastor in the conference. I was the first and only African American female pastor since the history of the United Church of Christ to be ordained in the South Central Conference.

In 1986, I graduated from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. I was the first African American woman to preach in the student-led chapel on a Southern Baptist Seminary campus. God spoke to me in March, 1984 telling me that I would preach in the Levell Chapel, and it came to pass in 1986. I have walked in the rim of miracles.

I continued to serve at Beecher until March of 1987, when I resigned and activated my profile within the office for Church Life and Leadership of the United Church of Christ. I was contacted by the search committee of Emmanuel in April and continued to talk with them by phone until July 1, 1987, when my interview with the congregation took place.

During the interview, a man about 90 years old told me that I was well qualified, but Lexington did not have women preachers. After the interview, the chairperson of the search committee told me she did not think that I would get the church because when Brother "X" speaks everybody listens, after all he has been around the church since 1924. I simply told her that God would give them the pastor that they needed, and me the church I needed.

On August 1, 1987, the congregation voted to call me the pastor of Emmanuel United Church of Christ. On September 1, 1987, I began my ministry with the

church. When I arrived in Lexington that Sunday morning, Brother "X" was sitting on the second row with the deacons saying "Amen" very loud to my sermon. I wondered for weeks what converted him. Soon Brother "N" who was 91, told me that he had convinced Brother "X" to give me a chance. Brother "X" has been one of my strongest supporters. He is now 96 years old.

In the Lexington community, there are not many outspoken African -American women. I find it very difficult to live in a town where the preachers are constantly preaching about the place of women. I became so perturbed that I led a march down Main Street on July 4, 1993 passing a historical African -American church and historical European church that both exclude women in leadership of their churches. The march was centered around the theme "Women In Bondage In The Church." Our bumper sticker read "Leadership in the Church Not Male Only, Mary told the boys He's up." This march caused editorials, news coverage and constant streams of reactions from the community. It is my hope that African-American women in this community will arise from their sleep in the church and walk in the freedom God has given them.

My voice does not stop in my community because I raise it loud in the association, conferences, and national churches. I remind the leaders that African -American women should be at the table when decisions are made and not only invited to carry them out.

I see myself as a voice crying out in the wilderness, the Kingdom of God is at hand. We must use all to usher in the Kingdom. We also need African -

American women to lead Kingdom work today. If I perish let me perish because I am before " The King that be today."

B. Context of Ministry

The lack of African-American female leadership within the local and National churches presses me to develop an Afrocentric hermeneutic that equips African-American women to be leaders within the United Church of Christ, particularly within the leadership of the 288 African-American congregations within the United Church of Christ.

Historical Context

The United Church of Christ (UCC) emerged from four denominations. First, German Reformed Church, U.S., which followed Calvinist beliefs and traditions, began establishing congregations in the U.S. in 1875. In 1973, the synod of German Reformed Church in the U.S. was found. In 1967, the name "German" was dropped from the Synod Title.

Second, the Evangelical Synod in North America basically followed Lutheran, reformed and other beliefs. In the 1800's, German immigrants of the evangelical perspective established churches in the midwest. In 1872, these churches organized into the German Synod of North America. By 1927, the name "German" was dropped from Synod title.

The congregational churches basically followed Calvinistic, Puritan and Congregational beliefs. In the 1620's, the Puritans came to Massachusetts and

united to begin North American Congregationalism. In 1892, the Congregational Methodist joined and in 1927 the German Congregationalist joined the North American Congregationalist.

The Christian Churches were formed in 1794 by O'Kelly "Christians." In 1801, the First Free Christian Church was organized in Vermont. By 1850, the American Christian Convention of the churches in the Northeast had formed. In 1854, the Southern Christian Convention was formed. In 1922, the Christian Church was organized.

The Evangelical and Reformed Churches united in 1934; they both stressed liberty of conscience, authority of scriptures, and their common liberal German Protestant heritage. In 1931, the congregational and Christian Churches united because they both stressed congregational freedom and continuing reformation.

In 1957, these churches united to form the United Church of Christ. The United Church of Christ has nearly 2 million members and over 6,338 congregations throughout America. These churches are located in cities, suburbs and rural areas. The United Church is a diverse church and includes an ethnically diverse group of people.

Particular Context

Among the 6,338 congregations within the UCC, there are 288 African-American Churches (AAC). Almost 75% of the 288 congregations ascend from the congregational Christian wing of the UCC. The other 25% are transitional churches, emerging out of the Reformed and Evangelical Churches. Because of

transitional neighborhoods (white flight), African-American pastors were called to the transitional churches.

Almost fifty percent of African-American Churches (AAC) are located in the Southern Conference of the UCC. The Southern Conference Houses 134 of our African-American churches.

Despite the fact that the United Church of Christ is one of the most liberal and affirming denominations in the United States, there are many conservatives at the local church level. Even though the constitution of the United Church of Christ affirms leadership in the church from both male and female, there are very few African-American women in leadership positions within the 6,338 United Church of Christ congregations.

To be specific, there are 288 African-American churches, but only 8 full-time African-American female pastors. Out of 288 churches there are only 8 full-time Associate female pastors. Other ministers include 4 part-time pastors and about 10 part-time Associate pastors. Most of the women do not have full ministerial standing within the United Church of Christ. Ministers without full standing cannot participate in the Pension Fund of the UCC.

Before the merger of the four bodies into The United Church of Christ, four African-American females were ordained by the Congregational Christian Church. After the merger into the United Church of Christ, it took another sixteen years before another African-American female was ordained. Since 1974, over fifty African-American females have been ordained, but many have fallen through the

cracks of ministry.

Statistics from The Office of Secretary of The United Church of Christ shows that the majority of the women are displaced.

African-American Women in Ministry within the United Church of Christ

ORDAINED	LICENSED	IN-CARE	NO STATUS or DROPPED
Pastor	7	4	
Associate Pastors	8	4	
Seminarians			23
Chaplains	9		
Displaced Women	25		25
Conference			
Association	2		
National Office	4		
Global	4		

There are over 300 African-American males with full-standing within The United Church of Christ. Out of the 288 churches there are 238 filled pulpits. About 226 are filled by African-American males. At the present time there are about 50 congregations in the search process for a pastor. Many of the congregations in search will not consider a female.

Too often churches that I call "911," those churches which are unable to attract a male candidate because the pay is too low, are the only congregations that will consider a woman. This is the situation I came into six years ago at

Emmanuel.

Local Context

Emmanuel is not a new congregation. Its history dates back to just after the Civil War when many persons came to Lexington to help the freed slaves and to assist the slave children to obtain a liberal education.

With the help of the American Missionary Association (A.M.A.), schools and a church were organized for these former slaves. The Association itself grew out of a shipload of slaves who overpowered their slave masters and tried to return to their homes. The slaves were recaptured, but their plight stirred the conscience of Arthur Tappan, who spent most of his fortune buying their freedom, and establishing the A.M.A.

In 1891, The Rev. B. Gunner, of Boston, where the A.M.A. headquarters was then located, wrote a letter to Dr. J. E. Hunter, a young physician starting his practice in Lexington, inquiring as to the possibility of establishing a congregational church in the city. Dr. Hunter's reply was favorable, and Mr. Gunner came to Lexington with his wife. In October of the same year, a group composed of Dr. Hunter, P.D. Robinson, Professor J.W. Bate and Mrs. Amanda Campbell, among others, met and formally organized the First Congregational Church of Lexington in a hall on Short Street. A later move was made to the U.S.F. Hall above Will Taylor's Livery Stable on North Limestone, between Short and Barr Streets. Just before the turn of the century, the church bought the old Slone Market on West Short Street, and built a church in the traditional New

England architecture.

About this same time, The Daniel Hand School, located at Corral and Race Streets, was started for an elementary school for Negro children. The first teachers of the school were Miss Cecily Savoy and Mrs. Byron Gunner, wife of the minister of the First Congregational Church, which had been renamed the Chandler Memorial Congregational Church. A Mrs. Shaw, who supervised the school, later became principal of the Chandler School, which operated from 1889 to 1919 on a five acre campus on Georgetown Street. Both schools were organized with the aid of the A.M.A. After the Chandler School closed, the building was used to house the Chandler Church, and the Chandler School was sold.

The United Church of Christ which had been meeting in the gymnasium of the Douglas School was given an ultimatum by the national headquarters¥grow or die. According to the church's interim pastor, the Rev. A.V. Pinckney, the future of the church was optimistic. Actually, only four months of the time extended to the church remained. Rev. Pinckney came to Lexington for the interim pastorate on February 12, 1966. His report on the progress of the church was due August 12, 1969. To survive, the church needed to add 15 more members to its present 40 according to the national headquarters of the United Church of Christ.

Two acres of land was purchased from Joseph N. Fister to the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church for $30,000 in St. Martin's Village (North Georgetown Street near New Circle Road). It was on this new location

that Emmanuel church hoped to build. In reality, the Emmanuel Church was an extension of the old Chandler Church, the only church affiliated with the United Church of Christ in Lexington.

The strength of this relocated and renamed church was expected to come from the people of the surrounding area, and the fact that the church was the only one in the locality that was not identified with Pentecostal or holiness denominations. It was through the association with the young (about half of the members of the church are students) that the church was optimistic. "Barring no set-backs, the church will survive," Mr. Pinckney said, but a permanent minister must be found, and a building must be constructed. If the members were not found soon, and the church did not start growing, the two acres of land would be resold, and the money funneled elsewhere.

When the Emmanuel Church succeeded, it hoped to focus on the cultural, recreational, and spiritual needs of the congregation and the neighborhood. It was hoped that the church building would also become a community center, with leadership to the St. Martin's Village area. With the community outreach approach, permanent leadership and cooperation among churches in the area, the need for this kind of church had become apparent.

Rev. Curry was called after the small Emmanuel congregation proved to the national headquarters of the United Church of Christ that they were growing. In 1969 Rev. Curry said, he foresees a "truly integrated church" composed of persons from all ethnic groups, doing a "NEW THING" in the liberal tradition.

Between 1974 and 1987, Emmanuel suffered a great transition. The church grew, but later found itself in a strange renewal. In September of 1987, Emmanuel called her first female pastor, The Reverend Leticia Rouser. Again the church was threatened by the conference to close if it did not grow. Emmanuel's leadership was subsidized by the conference for three years. In October of 1988, Emmanuel paid off the mortgage of $10,000.00 that was borrowed from the Homeland Board. In September of 1990, Emmanuel became self -supporting for the first time, since the 1950's. Emmanuel struggled to survive during the 80's and continued to look toward the Word of God for the 90's, that says, "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43:19.

During 1987-1989, I was the only African-American female Senior pastor ordained with full standing in The United Church of Christ. Since then the number of Senior pastors has increased, but it does not reflect the number of women that have come In-care with The United Church of Christ.

C. Synergy Statement

As we move into the twenty-first century, The United Church of Christ continues to give leadership to the political, social, and economic systems of injustice. Paul Sherry, The National President of The United Church of Christ, is constantly reminding our church that we must be a church that's inclusive of all

people. Every time I hear his message, it reminds me of the great injustice that happens in our local churches when females accept their calls to the ordained ministry. Because of the teaching from local pulpits against female leadership, many lay people are convinced that women should not lead them.

In my local context of ministry, I am constantly faced with the reality of how sexist the institution called "Church" is, and I am challenged to begin breaking down this reality. I find myself immersed in a context that affirms my leadership at the national level yet rejects my leadership in many of the churches at the local level.

By self-description my role in this context is to call out the sexist behavior that is being proliferated in the church. My role is to proclaim that justice rolls down from the national church to local congregations. In particular, I will encourage the 288 African-American congregations of The United Church of Christ to begin struggling with the issue of ordaining women through an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic. Hopefully, this Afrocentric biblical hermeneutics will engender an awareness for African -American lay people and cause them to confront their attitude and beliefs about ordained female leadership in the church.

I want lay people to begin to struggle with the question, "Is God's church inclusive?" The need for inclusivity in the church is great; the harvest is plentiful, but who confront this issue today? Who will support the right of women to be fully be used by God? I will!

PHASE II - FOUNDATIONS: BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL

A. Statement of Project Focus

Develop an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic to educate African-American lay people of the United Church of Christ on the propriety of ordaining women.

Working definition of Afrocentric biblical hermeneutics:

People of African descent engaging in critical biblical interpretation such that:

1. Scripture is used critically and proactively to achieve an anticipatory interventionist praxis for the liberation and empowerment of Black peoples.
2. Afrocentric biblical interpreters maintaining a healthy "hermeneutics of suspicion" in the interrogation of biblical texts (i.e., guarding against an uncritical biblical literalism, and taking seriously the patriarchal and androcentric character of the biblical world and biblical texts).
3. Afrocentric biblical interpreters utilize a wide array of significant, relevant, and critically responsible Afrocentric sources in the pursuit of a liberationist

hermeneutic for both men and women.[1]

B. Theological, Biblical, and Historical Foundation for Project Focus

Theologically, an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic is essential to: (1) eliminate the misconceptions of patriarchal leadership in the local church and (2) to advocate a theology of inclusion. Local congregations are infiltrated with vigorous sermonizers who have used scripture to subjugate African-American women in the church. Dr. Clarice Martin quotes a noted theologian to bring this message to surface in her article "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women.'"

> This "trivialization of women" impart an outgrowth of a biblical literalism---has thus perpetuated a very real and dangerous ethos in ecclesial communities. This ethos argues that not only should women's supportive roles in theological and ecclesiastical institutions and structures be nurtured as normative, but women have no natural right to shape and influence policy and lives in church society." The masculine model is the rational, orderly head and leader; the feminine model is the emotional, chaotic, submissive heart, which follows and supports." Feminist critiques of patriarchy and androcentrism constitute a radical call for the church to take seriously its agency as a vehicle through which God can achieve the full humanity of all persons."[2]

The African-American Church needs a hermeneutic that will enlighten and encourage lay people to readdress the question of female leadership in the local church. In particular, lay people need to struggle with the question of ordained

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[1]To explain what is meant by an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic, I am using the working definition of Dr. Clarice Martin and Dr. William Myers.

[2]Clarice J. Martin, "The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African-American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women,'" ed. Cain Hope Felder, Stony the Road We Trod: An African-American Biblical Interpretation (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 221-222.

female leadership in the church. Local churches often have not scrutinized Jesus' behavior toward women in the gospel and construed it as pertinent to the question of ordained women. The guidelines of the Pauline writings are often normative, and because of this, women called to ordained ministries are not taken seriously by lay people or clergymen in the life of the local churches. Therefore, even in 1994, there is a wide gap between the number of African -American female clergy and African-American male clergy doing pastoral ministry in the local church.

> Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy,your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my Spirit. (Joel 2:28-29)[3]

Joel's vision of Israel being blessed by God includes females and males. Joel describes the Spirit pouring out on all flesh. Living out the vision of inclusiveness when it comes to the leadership of local churches is usually not actualized. Most African-American churches glean from the writing of Paul that restrict women from leadership positions in the church. Paul's writings of "restrictions" seems to enthrall the "theological heartbeat" of the church, while at the same time African-American males thrive upon those texts that imply equality among the races; they are expeditious about finding those "freedom texts", yet they resist accepting equality of the sexes. "For freedom, Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore and do not submit to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

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[3]Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy, ed. The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard version. New York: Oxford University, 1991. (Note: All Scripture will come from this Bible.)

African-American males will march for freedom among the races everyday if needed, but there are not many who will march against sexism. The African-American community, at this time, is convinced that race is the issue for today. Sexism is not listed on the agenda, nor is it viewed as a valued concern of the African-American community in general.

> The black community stands committed to the values of freedom espoused by the framers of the constitution without accepting their racism. The patriotism of black people takes root in the interpretation of the Exodus tradition as a precursor to the experience of black people in America.[4]

Why is racism a priority for the African-American church yet sexism ignored? Is it because the African-American church has constantly received misinterpretations of the Pauline Texts. For example, "I permit no women to teach or have authority over a man; she is to keep silent." (I Timothy 2:12)

> This is the last and strongest Pauline statement keeping women out of the pulpit and in the pew. At the very least it seems to forbid them teaching when men are present or in authority.[5]

What are the construed theological overtones for lay people? What are the implications of the text? Have women ever been fully silent in the African-American church? Does silent mean singing, teaching, praying and speaking, but no pulpit privileges? In fact, if she is to keep silent is a "local church theology", why isn't it practiced?

> "If the creation order restricts women from teaching and eldership, why not in every area of life? Is there some correlation between man's creation and the

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[4]Stephen Breck Reid, Experience and Tradition: A Primer in Black Biblical Hermeneutics. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 53-54.

[5]Charles Trombley, Who Said Women Can't Teach? South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge, 1985) 161.

> pulpit? To be consistent, this logic should restrict women in every stratum of social and spiritual life and not just teaching and eldership. Adam wasn't created the first teaching elder but the first human."[6]

Is God sexist? Are women created unequal? If so, how does this theology differ from that of the Klu Klux Klan? Should African-American theology escape the practice of "once a slave always a slave", only to continue the practice of women's silence in the church because of Eve's sin?

> If God's acts of redemption lift the effects of death, shame, independence, and irresponsibility, is it not also possible that Adam (and all men) can try to make work more pleasurable and that Eve (and all women) can try to make labor more pleasurable?... She too is entitled to go beyond the curse. The cross shines in two directions: after Jesus' death and before Jesus' death.... Yet we should go beyond the curse to live lives affected by Christ's redemption.[7]

Is not the redemptive blood of Jesus powerful enough to override the past? Is it possible to practice a gender inclusive theology in the local church? "There is no longer Jew or Greek. There is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female for all of us are one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28).

Despite the call of the Galatians text to be inclusive, there is a male exclusive theology living in the church: Womanist and feminist theologians are working to dispel the misconceptions of a male exclusive theology. It's time for the lay people to wrestle with the larger theological mandate of the church, the "Great Commission," which calls everyone to go and share the good news.

Lay people have been bombarded with messages that overtly and covertly

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[6]Ibid., 162.

[7]Aida Besancon Spencer, Beyond the Curse: Women Called To Ministry (Nashville: Camden, New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985) 42.

discriminate against women in pastoral leadership positions in the church. These messages have declared to lay people that women should not have authority over men. We must remember that "man is the head of the woman and if a woman wants to learn let her ask her own husband." (I Corinthians 14:34-36). Messages like these cast shadows upon women in ministry when taken out of context. For instance, how should single women learn? What about divorced or abandoned women? To press the point what about women who have married men who are unchurched? What can help lay people grasp the theological concepts of scriptural interpretations; i.e., fundamentalism versus liberalism? What are the broader connotations of theological sexism in the church?

Before writing this paper, I surveyed a small group of African-American women who are Baptist and United Church of Christ members. Most of them said, "I don't think women should preach because my pastor said so; it has always been that way, and that's just how it is." I asked them if they had studied the Bible for themselves on this subject and discovered God's will for women. Most of them said "No, I just believe what my pastor said, 'let the women keep silent in the church.' " Then I asked them if the women are silent in their churches, they all said "No". The women left the experience astonished by the revelation that women are not fully silent in their churches. (I interviewed four Baptist women and two United Church of Christ women. Their ages ranged from 25-55).[8]

There is a need for an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic that would empower lay

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[8]The interviews took place in Lexington, Kentucky on September 14-15, 1993.

people to approach the issue of ordaining women. There is a great disparity between Jesus' attitude toward women compared to some of PaulsO writings. The four gospels reveal Jesus' attitude when encountering women as positive and he publicly associated with them. (Matthew 15:28; Mark 5:6; Luke 21:1-4; John 4:4-27).

> Women followed him as his disciples, some apparently having left prominent families behind. He refused to honor, follow, vindicate, or accept many of the traditional laws which kept women in bondage. And all this within a framework which said, "woman is in all things inferior to the man" and rather should the words of the Torah be burned than entrusted to a woman.[9]

Jesus was called upon many times in the gospel to bring judgment upon women. One time Jesus was eating at the house of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus when a dispute arose. Martha wanted Mary to help her in the kitchen, so she decided to ask Jesus to tell Mary to help. "Lord do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha you are worried and distracted by many things. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:40b - 41). Jesus words changed many peoples view of women's role in society.

> With these words He stripped away centuries of male domination and religious tradition. Basically, He was saying, "It has been said" women belong in the home, "but I say to you the most important thing in knowing the word. Mary has chosen the best thing". As far as the Son of God was concerned, the Talmudic traditions, the patriarchal positions, and woman's social stigma were voided once and for all. Mary's choice to study the word was more important

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[9]Trombley, Who Said Women Can't Teach?, 217.

than tradition.[10]

Jesus recognized Mary's personal worth, her ability to learn and her freedom of choice to be as valid as a man's. Jesus refused to honor many of the Jewish traditions because He was the fulfillment of the New Covenant. The church has decided to adopt a Pauline perspective that restrict women's empowerment instead of a more Christ-centered perspective. The church has spent enough time living within molded traditions; it is now time to do the ministry of Christ with all the people of God. In particular, an Afrocentric biblical hermeneutic must be invoked to reveal the blind sexism within local churches. The slave masters (male) are cracking the whips (misinterpreting scriptures) on plantations (local churches) and the slaves (women) are afraid to leave their places (bondage). In the midst of the plantations, the drums and organs play, and the silent hearts of the slaves cry out to God, "make us free, let us go free. I don't want to carry water to the pulpit to the master. I don't want to sit across from master to nurse him, but I want to stand in his place if that's my calling." In other words women should have all rights and privileges to serve in positions where God calls, and if the pulpit is the place, then let it be. This analogy reminds me of Israel and their plight to be free. The cry was silent and unheard by the master, yet God heard it loud and clear. Who will God send to set women free? How long will God allow the cry of the people to be unanswered? I predict God will move in the midst of God's people, stirring the silent. And if preachers are silent in such a time as

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[10]Ibid., 220.

this, deliverance may rise from other voices (lay people).

The relevant theological reasons for this project focus are to: empower African-American women to do pastoral ministry throughout the whole life of the United Church of Christ; to allow lay people to explore the necessity of a gender inclusive church, to dispel the male only ordained view of ministry; to call the church to follow Christ and less male dominated traditions; to become the "whole" body of Christ in ministry.

C. Goals

Personal Goals

1. To become more sensitive to the needs of lay people and their understanding of ministry in the life of church.
2. To learn more about my ministry as a female in the life of the United Church of Christ.
3. To overcome the negative stereotypes of females in leadership positions.
4. To overcome the self -hatred that has been taught to me as a female, seeing females as the "lesser sex".
5. To develop a genuine appreciation for the office of ministry, without confusing the Pauline texts.
6. To learn more about God's call of female to do ministry.

Project Goals

1. Lay people will learn that God does call women to leadership roles in the church.
2. Lay people will begin to deal with sexism in the church.

3. Lay people will experience leadership from African-American female pastors.

4. Lay people will be motivated to advocate change in the local congregations located within The Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ.

5. Lay people will recognize the gifted women God has used in the Bible.

6. Lay people will discover that God is using women to give leadership to the church today.

7. Lay people will struggle with the issue of an inclusive church where all will be allowed to lead.

8. Lay people will begin to see a God that is inclusive of all people.

9. Lay people would equate race and sex as equally important issues.

D. Summary of Learning Needed Both by Myself and Others Within the Context of Ministry

1. Learn what God's word says about women in ordained leadership.

2. Learn the historical and biblical context in which the scripture was written.

3. Learn the historical developments of women's rights.

4. Learn the biblical and theological revelations of women's rights.

5. Learn to be open to the changing of traditions through the revelation of God's spirit today.

6. Learn to regard sex as equally important as the race issue.

7. Learn the relevance of scripture in today's context.

8. Learn to respect the right of women to be fully active in all areas of life, especially to be seen as a role model and leader for the church.

E. Resource Review

In the last decade, there has been an increase in materials written about the issues of women in leadership positions in the church. However, the process to develop an Afrocentric resource that addresses the issues of leadership in the church is slow. There are several major contributions to the issue of women in leadership in the African-American Church in the works, some of which are being released as I prepare this paper.

During my search for resources crucial to the foundation and grounding of my project, I have discovered a number of books that are helpful as I prepare to develop an Afrocentric Hermeneutic to educate African-American lay people. In Memory of Her, A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins, is an essential resource for organizing the early beginning of women. It is critical for us to trace the vision and struggle of our foresisters in the First Century.

Dr. Elisabeth Fiorenza attempted to show that women as the people of God, as the Ekklesia of women, can claim the apostolic tradition. Our foresisters had the example of Jesus for their own Feminist vision and praxis of coequal discipleship.

Dr. Fiorenza reconstructed Christian beginnings not only as the history of patriarchal male agency but also as the history of women's struggles for liberation. She reminds us that the history of patriarchal oppression must not be allowed.

In Memory of Her, is an important book and it will help me to lay the groundwork for the Historical struggle of sexism in the church. It is helpful in

that it allows a retrospective view of male domination in the church. A reconstruction of early Christian history is critical in a Feminist perspective because it raises difficult hermeneutical, textual and historical problems. It allows for questions without easy answers.

Woman Hating is about women and men, the roles they play and the violence between them. Andrea D'Workin begins her work with fairy tales. She says first scenarios of women and men which mold our psyches are taught to us before we can know differently. In fairy tales women are viewed as weak and evil, men are strong and good.

Woman Hating will help me to develop materials that will enhance the consciousness of lay people and why their attitudes develop early on about women in leadership.

Paul and the Christian Woman is an important resource because Brendan Byrne deals with the question of whether Paul was the male chauvinist of the New Testament. The book raises the question and offers an honest solution.

Byrne raises the relationship between women and men, and the consequent relationship which exists between women and men who must stand equal before God. He believes that Jesus was the only person that has lived properly in History.

This is helpful because it deals more with the Pauline and post-Pauline literature. It discusses the major text in the New Testament that seems to be restrictive to women, or prohibit women's leadership in the church. This resource

will be vital as I develop the learning module.

Let the Oppressed Go Free, Luise Schottroff explores the role of gender within the biblical tradition and documents its continuing influence on subsequent life and thought. She relates bondage in the Bible to three areas: Oppression of Slaves, of debtors, and of people.

Dr. Schottroff's biblical tradition describes bondage in this radical way because those afflicted by it have already, in part, experienced liberation - they are standing already with one foot on liberated territory.

This book will be resourceful because Schottroff studies Paul and women in the first Christian communities. Schottroff lifts up the contradiction between theory and practice in regards to women.

Beyond the Curse, Aida B. Spencer examines attitudes and teachings of Jesus and Paul toward women. She raised Jesus as the example person that breaks cultural barriers of first-century Palestine. Her research is important because she urges us to go beyond the curse in a different direction, acknowledging women as equal partners in ministry, marriage and parenting.

Many people have not dealt with the fall of humanity and the resurrection through the blood of Jesus. This book brings the issue to the table and encourages us to move beyond yesterday to the forgiveness of today. This resource will be helpful as I prepare to lecture for the learning module.

"A Womanist Reflection on 1 Corinthians 7:21-24 and 1 Corinthians 14: 33-35" is a vital resource in that it explains these scriptures from a womanist perspective.

Linda Boston adds her touch to the text as she expounds in the African-American female struggle.

Boston suggests that these scriptures were used as tools of submission. Her commentary on these texts are important because they allow us to see scripture in a fresh and new way. This resource will be helpful as I prepare biblical study tools in the module.

Last, but not least, Stony the Road We Trod (edited by Cain Hope Felder) is a helpful resource as I prepare to focus from an Afrocentric perspective. Because of the limited resources written from an Afrocentric view, this resource will prove helpful as a textbook of guidance.

This resource marks the emergence of a critical mass of African-American scholars. It is a witness of the rich spirits that are embedded so deep within our culture.

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Anderson, Bentley W. "How to Hijack a Church (Campaign for women's ordinations; satire)." Touchstone (US) 4:17-18 Summer 1990.

The article is a letter written responding to someone who asked Anderson's advice as an Episcopalian on how to spur a denomination into ordaining women. She gives basic principles which can be adopted by anyone writing to ordain women in their denomination.

The letter contains good advice but the flavor is European.

Byrne, Brendan S.J. Paul and the Christian Woman. Collegeville: Minnesota 1988.

Paul and the Christian Women takes a critical look at the evidence, not to put Paul on trial, but to review the material in its original context, to see why Paul took the positions he did, and to determine both the limits and possibilities of using these texts appropriately.

Does Paul's writing on women amount simply to restrictive laws or are they also part of his liberating gospel? This book attempts an answer.

The author's intentions is to study the text concerning women in their contexts and try to assess as accurately as possible their meaning and purpose in their original setting. His hope is to indicate the circumstances in the communities which gave rise to Paul's statements and which may account for whatever development in his thought appears to take place. The chief focus lies upon the mind of Paul and the relating of his statements on women to his overall sense of Christian status and mission.

The author concludes that the task is difficult, but we must embody the values of Jesus when circumstances and community life changes.

This is a useful hermeneutical tool but it does not have an Afrocentric focus.

Boston, Linda J. "A Women Reflection on I Corinthians 7:21-24 and I Corinthians 14:33-34." Religion 9-10: 81-89. 1990-1991.

Linda Boston relates the human experience of African-American Women's reflection on Paul's moral teachings regarding the status of a slave.

She deals with the household codes, the status of slaves and women. The article concludes that the gap between the races and the sexes continue to grow.

Boston's article is resourceful as a partial hermeneutical tool to build a bridge for lay people.

Cannon, Katie G. and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, eds. "Interpretation for Liberation," Semeia 47 (1989).

Semeia 47 is a collection of essays from young scholars who seek to fashion new models and approaches for a Christian biblical interpretation that could support people's struggle for justice, self-determination and freedom. These essays speak from social contexts, hermeneutical points of view, and theological

interest quite different from those of Euro-American Christian Biblical Scholarships. They share the theoretical interest which have emerged across academic disciplines in discourses of resistance. Such so called "minority discourses" have been generated by those who are marginalized in academy and society but who in fact constitute the majority women of all colors and men exploited by racism, classism and colonialism (Abdul R. TanMohamed and David Lloyd, 1987).

This resource is helpful in that it raises the issues of racism, classism, and colonialism. It also exposes the writing of Afrocentric scholars, which is fresh hermeneutical tool of the day. It reveals how Afrocentric biblical interpretations expands and elaborates on certain biblical phrases and motifs in order to shape a religious Christian tradition appropriate to the situation of the black community. It is an excellent resource but we are still in need of a resource that will help lay people to deal with the issue of sexism in the church.

D'workin, Andrea. Woman Hating. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1974.

This book is an action, a political action where revolution is the goal. The core of this book is an analysis of sexism (that system of male dominance). What it is, how it operates on us. This book articulates clearly what oppression of women is, how it functions, how it is rooted in psyche and culture.

Andrea Dworkin acknowledges that she writes with a broken tool, or language which is sexist and discriminatory to its core. Her ideas are powerful and dangerous. This book is about the Immovable Sexual Structure.

The author relates her book to the struggle of all women including African-American women, but the focus is Eurocentric.

Felder, Cain H. "Out of Africa I Have Called My Son (Afrocentric biblical interpretation)" The Other Side 28:8-14 n-d, 1992.

Dr. Felder discusses the new interpretative approaches to scripture. The approaches include cultural exegesis and Afrocentric biblical interpretation. He says the Bible reflects a genuine multiculturalism. Its pages are laced with racial and ethnic diversity.

Dr. Felder concludes that by modern western standards, the earliest biblical people would have been classified as "Blacks." They had a definite measure of African blood and clearly resembled many individuals who would today be identified as African-Americans.

Biblically we need to bring "new eyes" to ancient texts. We need to open scripture and see not just Greeks and Romans, but also Asians, Africans, and women.

This resource is very supportive of the Afrocentric prospective, but lacks the Womanist view.

Felder, Cain Hope, ed. Stony the Road We Trod. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.

Stony The Road We Trod offers a fresh challenge to all Bible interpreters. A challenge that intends to be thoroughly constructive as a preliminary bridge to celebrating not "his-story" alone, but all of "our stories" as the people of God. The presupposition for this book is that we must engage the new challenge to recapture the ancient biblical vision of racial and ethnic pluralism as shaped by the Bible's own universalism.

The resource is a powerful hermeneutical tool. It touches all of the system of society within the African American Community. Its flavor is directed to those of the academic world, but lay people are in need of a tool to help them to struggle within the issue of racism, sexism, and classism.

Fiorenza, Elizabeth Schüssler. In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins. New York: Crossroad, 1983.

This is Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza monumental study of the Pauline material on women; it is a ground breaking work.

This is a comprehensive critical model of interpreting ('Feminist hermeneutic of suspicion') the Pauline writing. Professor Fiorenza aims to reconstruct early Christian history as women's history, to recovery the traces of the original discipleship of equals and the partnership in mission that flowered from it, to chart the gradual displacement of women's leadership under the influence of tendencies towards male dominance ('androcentric tendencies') that shape virtually the entire written record contained in the New Testament. The hope is not merely to restore women's stories to early Christian history but to allow the recovery of the egalitarian witness in the New Testament to spark a new non-patriarchal Christian vision and praxis. The discussions of this book seek to provide new lens that enable one to read the biblical sources in a new feminist light, in order to engage in the struggle for women's liberation inspired by the Christian feminist vision of the discipleship of equals.

This resource in phenomenal, but its focus is only women's rights, the Afrocentric focus is absent.

Reid, Stephen Breck. Experience and Tradition: A Primer In Black Biblical Hermeneutics. Nashville: A Bingdon, 1990.

This volume introduces readers to a method of reading and interpreting the Bible in the black church. Stephen Breck Reid focuses on the black identify and how scripture provides the vehicle for investigation of that identity. He also explores the way black religious tradition informs the interpretation of scripture.

Each chapter demonstrates a different way to deal with the recovery of black poetry, novels, music, biblical themes, critical awareness and racial pride to shed new light on Bible-reading in the black church. The use of many specific examples, experiences and tradition helps readers understand black biblical hermeneutics and its interaction with contemporary black culture.

Professor Reid has developed an excellent Afrocentric Hermeneutical tool, but the Womanish perspective is left out of his focus.

Sanders, Cheryl J. "Afrocentricsm and Womanish in the Seminary." Christian Crisis 52: 123-126, April 13, 1992.

In this article, Cheryl Sanders discusses the works of Molefi Asante, Alice Walker, and Patricia Collins. Sanders lifts up the significant contributions they have made to explaining how knowledge, norms and experience are validated within and outside the African-American community.

Sanders focuses her article on the terms Afrocentrism and Womanish coined by the African-American writers within the past decade to describe the distinctive thought and experience of our people.

This article is an excellent resource because it names many of the writers of Afrocentrism and Womanish Theology. It has both an afrocentric and Womanistic focus, but lacks a hermeneutic tool for lay people.

Schottroff, Luise. Let the Oppressed Go Free: Feminist Perspectives on the New Testament. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminister John Knox, 1993.

These essays are of great interest to biblical studies in general and feminist biblical scholarship in particular. They introduce the feminist social-historical method that Professor Schottroff has developed [and] contributed to North American Feminist debates. Her careful inquiry into whether to neglected areas of historical research unearths a wealth of social-historical in- formation that make early Christian women come alive as people.

This book draws together fascinating recent studies of aspects on the New Testament of special interest to women by a leading European scholar. These essays, translated for the first time, will deepen feminist scholarship in the English-speaking world. One chapter deals widely with experiences of liberation. Other chapters vividly portray women as Jesus' disciples and carriers of Jewish and Christian religion. This is an excellent resource, but it lacks an Afrocentric focus.

Spencer, Ai'da Besancon. Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry. Nashville: Thomas Nelson', 1985.

In her discussion of creation, Spencer demonstrates that a partnership was intended between women and men. The curse brought about a power struggle in relationship but did not establish a new order; however, as Spencer explains that the curse was broken with Christ's work of redemption.

In examining attitudes and teachings toward women, Jesus is shown to break the cultural barriers of first century Palestine. The later Pauline works are found to be consistent with Jesus' views, as Spencer notes in the vital place of women in Paul's ministry.

Beyond the Curse shed light on instances in the New Testament of feminine authority and the use of feminine metaphors used in scripture to define God, the church, and society. It searches the scriptures and focuses on the teachings and attitudes of Jesus towards women and the Pauline works

particularly the recurring question of whether women should "in silence learn in all submission" (I Timothy 2:11).

Beyond the Curse is a surprising and important statement from a feminine vantage point, but there is no afrocentric focus.

Tate, W. Randolph. Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendricks, 1991.

This book is about interpretations. It concerns the poetics of the discipline of hermeneutics. Tate guides the student on a "journey into the three worlds"¥the world behind the biblical text, the world within the text, the world in front of the text.

Tate has not, however, resigned himself merely to describe sterile methodologies of abstract theories. Concerned that readers have a practical grasp of the interpretive process, he offers descriptions, prescriptions example

and application. The volume is especially tailored to allow the non specialist and entree into the world of biblical interpretation. Thus, each chapter includes a review and study section where a listing of key terms discussed and defined in the text helps manage the terminology.

This is a very resourceful textbook on Biblical Interpretation and an excellent hermeneutical tool, but it's center is not Afrocentric.

Trombley, Charles. Who Said Women Can't Teach? South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge 1985.

In this study, Charles Trombley seeks answers for the unanswered questions that are raised whenever women in active ministry are discussed.

There is much truth expounded in this book that can release many more of God's servants to the ministries God has implanted in them. It should settle the spirits of many pastors who have needless doubts over the validity of women's ministries.11

It is highly commended but lacks an Afrocentric focus.

Weems, Renita J. " The Hebrew Women are not like Egyptian Women: The Ideology of Race, Gender, and Sexual Reproduction in Exodus." Semia 59: 25-34, 1992.

This article highlights the assumption that male children are more of a threat than female children, and in turn that men pose more of a threat to an empire than women.

Dr. Weems concludes that it is not only the midwives, but all the women in Exodus who shrewdly defy the pharaohs edict and lay the groundwork for the liberation of the people of Israel.

This article is a power in that it raises up the issues of race, gender and class struggles, yet Dr. Weems cautions the use of this text in modern society as a positive example in the struggle for liberation.

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APPENDIX B

PRETEST AND POST-TEST

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

I. BIIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1) **Last 4 digits of your Social Security Number** Date_____

___ ___ ___ ___

___Male ___Female Date of Birth_____

2) **Marital Status**

___Married ___Divorced
___Separated ___Never Married

3) **City**_____
State_____

4) **Highest Level of Education Completed?**
___Some High School ___GED
___High School Graduate ___Some College
___College Graduate ___College Graduate Plus
___Higher Than Master ___Master

5) **If you are employed, what is your current occupation?**_____
_____
_____

___Full Time **___Part-time**
___Unemployed - Looking **___Unemployed - Not Looking**
___Retired

6) **Name of Church**_____

7) **How long have you attended?**_____

8) **Name other Denominations you were a part of if any.**_____
_____
_____

9) **Who has been most significant in nurturing your Spiritual Development and Formation?**_____
_____

10) **Who are your role models in ministry?**_____

_____

_____

11) **Who helped to develop your beliefs about Women in Ministry?**_____

_____

_____

II. PERSONAL AWARENESS OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY.

1) **How familiar are you with Female Preachers?**

___very familiar ___somewhat unfamiliar

___somewhat familiar ___not familiar at all

2) **Do you have Female Pastors in your local community?**

___yes ___no ___How Many

3) **Have you ever heard a Female preach?**

___yes ___no

___how many times

___how many different females

4) **What was your response?**

___very positive ___somewhat negative

___somewhat positive ___very negative

5) **Are Female Preachers an issue in your church and community?**

___not at all ___moderate issue

___minor issue ___major issue

6) **Does your local church support Female Preachers?**

___yes ___no

7) **If yes, how?**_____

_____

_____

8) **Have you heard any of the debates over the ordination of Women?**

___yes ___no

9) **If yes, what have you heard?**_____

_____

10) **Have you ever discussed the issue of Women's ordination?**
___yes ___no

With whom?
___Friend ___Family ___Minister ___Other

11) **What is your opinion, if any, on the subject?**_____

12) **Which of the following statements best reflect your viewpoint:**
___The issue of ordaining women should not be addressed by minister from the pulpit.

___The issue of ordaining women should be addressed by the minister from the pulpit.

13) **If you checked the second statement, how do you feel this can best be done?**

14) **Are there any suggestions you would like to make especially for women who are preparing for ordained ministry?**

III. PERSONAL OPINIONS ABOUT MALE & FEMALE PREACHERS

1) **What are your images of male preachers?**

___stronger	___angelic	___authority
___weak	___God like	___aggressive
___passive	___God's voice	___above all
___servant	___shepherd	___leaders

(Rank characteristics 1-5)

2) **What are your images of women preachers?**

___stronger	___angelic	___authority
___weak	___God like	___aggressive
___passive	___God's voice	___above all
___servant	___shepherd	___leaders

(Rank characteristics 1-5)

3) **Do you feel there are special qualities/strengths that are unique to women in the ministry?_____If so please describe.**_____

4) **Do you feel there are problems/weaknesses unique to women as ministers?_ _____If so please describe.**_____

5) **How can these problems/weaknesses be dealt with efficiently?**_____

6) **Do you feel there are special qualities/strengths that are unique to men in the ministry?_____If so please describe.**_____

7) **Do you feel there are problems/weaknesses unique to men as ministers?___ If so please describe.**_____

8) **How can these problems/weaknesses be dealt with efficiently?**_____

IV. PERSONAL OPINION ABOUT CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

1) **How serious is the problem of racism in your community?**
___very serious ___serious
___not so serious ___not serious at all

2) **Is racism an issue your church is working on in your community?**
___much ___somewhat
___very little ___not at all

3) **How serious is the problem of sexism in your community?**
___very serious ___serious
___not so serious ___not serious at all

4) **Is sexism an issue your church is working on in your community?**
___much ___somewhat
___very little ___not at all

5) **Name three issues that your church and community should be working on.**
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

V. PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE

1) **Have you read Galatians 3:28?**
___yes ___no

2) **If so what does it say?**_____
_____
_____

3) **What scriptures have helped you to understand the role of women in the church? Please list or describe generally.**_____
_____
_____

4) **What scriptures give support to the role of women in ministry in your opinion?**_____
_____
_____

5) **What scriptures restrict the role of women in ministry in your opinion?**

_____

_____

6) **Who has helped you in understanding or interpreting the role of women in the church?**_____

_____

_____

7) **In your opinion, what is the role of a woman in the church?**_____

_____

_____

8) **Are you presently serving on the search committee of your local church?**

___yes ___no

9) **If yes, would you consider a female pastor as a pastor?**_____

_____

_____

10) **If no, why wouldn't you consider a female?**_____

_____

_____

11) **Would you please look over this list and tell me which terms, if any, you have heard something about.**

___Womanist Theology
___Liberation Theology
___Androcentric
___Afrocentricity
___Inclusive Language
___Feminist Theology

12) **Would you please look over this list and tell me which of these names, if any, you have heard something about.**

___Jacquelyn Grant
___Clarice Martin
___Renita Weems
___Delores Carpenter
___Bernice Powell
___Ben Chavis
___William Myers
___Yvonne delks
___Cain Hope Felder
___Jeremiah Wright

13) **Here is a list of books, please tell me which books you are familiar with.**

___God's Yes is Louder Than My No (Myers)
___A White Woman's Christ a Black Woman's Jesus (Grant)
___Stony The Road We Trod (Felder, ed.)
___Just a Sister Away - Womanist version of Women's Relationship in the Bible. (Weems)

IV. RATING PREACHING SKILLS OF FEMALE PREACHERS
(If you have heard a Female Preacher please rate, if not, you have completed this form)

Date_____

Event_____

Rate preacher abilities by checking:
Very Effective (V.E.)
Somewhat Ineffective (S.E.)
Somewhat Ineffective (S.I.)
Very Ineffective (V.I.)

1. **Material is well organized.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

2. **Main points are well supported.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

3. **Message is unified and clearly understood.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

4. **Message is sharp, specific, concrete.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

5. **Participation of face, body and voice support the message.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

6. **There is freshness/creativity in biblical interpretation and application to modern situations.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

7. **Object of sermon is achieved.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

8. **Sermon is relevant to the hearers real life situation**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

9. **Illustrative material is drawn from rich and varied sources.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

10. **Preacher is personally involved in the message and delivery.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

11. **Confidence is shown in message and delivery.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

12. **Preacher has a command of the language.**
___(V.E.) ___(S.E.) ___(S.I.) ___(V.I.)

Place an "X" on the continuum at the point which best describes your opinion. (If you wish, add a "C" on the continuum where you feel your congregation's attitude lies.)

The appearance, voice, or manner of the female preacher:

I	I	I
Distracts the hearers and detracts from the sermon	Is a factor which has little or no effect on the sermon	Greatly enhances the sermon

COMMENTS:

_____
_____
_____

The appearance, voice, or manner of the female preacher:

I	I	I
Is more effective than that of the male preacher	Is equally effective to that of the male preacher	Is less effective than that of the male preacher

COMMENTS:_____
_____
_____
_____

Authority assumed by the listeners to be present in the preacher:

I	I	I
Is much greater for the male than the female preachr	Is equally effective to that of the male preacher	Is much greater for the female than the male preacher

COMMENTS:

_____

_____

_____

_____

In light of church hisotry, The Bible, and social images, to what extent do congregations accept women in the role of the preacher today?

I	I	I
Absolute rejection	Moderate acceptance	Complete acceptance

APPENDIX C

TRAINING MODULES

LESSON 1-4

LESSON 1

RACISM, SEXISM, AND THE BIBLE

Definition of Racism, Sexism, The Bible

Black theology was developed to combat racism in the church, and to deal with the white racist interpretation of the slave master's oppressive use of scripture.

Black theology is

Black people pressed themselves beyond those negative interpretations of the scriptures and developed a theology that represented freedom for all races.

Feminist theology was developed to combat sexism in the church and deal with the patriarchical interpretation of the male chauvinist use of the scripture.

Feminist theology is

Liberation theology was developed out of the need to combat

political, social and religious oppression.

Liberation theology is

Womanist theology was developed to give voice to black women whom were not represented fully in Feminist theology or Black theology. Womanist theology is a call to deal with race, gender, and class.

Womanist theology is

"Klan theology" was developed to save the status of the white
race.

"Klan theology" is

Black theology	-	Let The Races Be Free!
Feminist theology	-	Let the sexes Be Free!
Liberation theology	-	Be Free Politically, Socially, and Spiritually
Womanist theology	-	Let The Whole Person Be Free

"Klan theology" - Let White Be Supreme!

Household Codes (Copy of 1)

Vocabulary

1. Androcentric -

2. Afrocentric -

3. Inclusive Language -

4. Patriarchical -

Case Study - South Africa "Apartheid"

Compare apartheid in South Africa with leadership in the Black church.

Example: Kentucky Black Baptist State Convention voted not to allow women to vote as messengers in the State Convention. Kevin Crosby called it apartheid in the Black church because 70% of the churches are women.

Study Questions

1. Why is racism an elevated issue over sexism in the Black church?

2. What are the effects of racism in the church and society?

3. What are the effects of sexism in the church and society?

4. What is the job of the Local Church?

LESSON 2

WOMEN AND THEIR ROLES IN THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH

Dr. William Myers' book God's Yes Is Louder Than My No: Rethinking the African-American call to Ministry is an excellent resource for the local church. Dr. Myers records the call stories of African-American women and men and their struggles to accept God's will for their lives. This book is a helpful tool for African-American lay people because it gives testimonies of the call being beyond human control.

Let us look at some of the roles women have been called to participate in by God.

Biblical Women

A. Esther (Esther)
B. Rahab (Joshua 2)
C. Huldah (2 Chronicles 34)
D. Deborah (Judges 4)
E. Mary The mother of Jesus (Matthew 1)
F. Mary Magdalene at the Tomb (John 20)
G. Mary and Martha (John 2)

African-American Women

1. Sojourner Truth - Developed the underground railroad.

2. Mary McLeod Bethune - Founded Bethune-Cookman College.
3. Rosa Parks - Started the Montgomery bus boycott.
4. Coretta Scott King - Civil Rights leader.
5. Yvonne Delk - First Black female to be ordained in the United Church of Christ.
6. Bernice Powell - First Black female to hold the position of Executive Director for the Commission for Racial Justice.
7. Clarice Martin - Womanist theologian and Ph.D. in the New Testament.
8. Renita Weems - Womanist theologian and Ph.D. in Old Testament.
9. Delores Carpenter - Black female pastor in the Disciple of Christ church.
10. Jacquelyn Grant - Womanist theologian and Ph.D. in Theology.

Study Questions

Are women silent in the African-American churches?

Have women ever been silent in the African-American churches? Joel 2:28

How is I Corinthians 14:33b-36 relevant to the call of women?

(Hand-out: Scott Odell's article)

What is the role of the local church in the call of women?

What would the church be like without women?

LESSON 3

JESUS' ROLE IN THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN

"Sin in the first Adam" and liberation through the second Adam.

Jesus Broke The Curse! For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Jesus' attitude toward women

A. Woman caught in adultery.
-- no man, not right

B. Woman at the well.
-- different race, sex and class, so what?

C. Mother Mary's request at the wedding.
-- will to do my Father's business, but did for his mother also.

D. Mary - should she cook or study?
-- Jesus, said, study that is the best work.

E. Syrophenician Woman

-- food not for you, but for the children. Mark 7:24-30

F. Mary Magdalene - women not to preach.

-- take the Gospel to the disciples Mary! Tell them I'm alive. John 20:17-18

Study Questions

How did Jesus break the curse?

How are we restored to our rightful places with God?

How is the curse of Genesis lifted?

When will the church remember what Christ has done?

LESSON 4

THE CALL TO BE AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH!

GALATIANS 3:23-28

(USED CHAPTER TWO IN THIS DISCUSSION)

APPENDIX D

REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE WORKSHOP

Bridging The Gap Between
Racism and Sexism
In
The African-American Church

Galatians 3:28

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: For ye all are one in Christ Jesus."

African-American
Laity Retreat

October 7-8, 1994

Franklin Center at Bricks

Friday, October 7, 1994

Opening 7:00 - 7:30 P.M.

Pre-Test

7:30 - 8:15 P.M.

Racism and Sexism,
Issues For The Local Church

Light Snack

8:35 - 9:20 P.M.

Women's Roles In The Bible
And The Church

Order Of The Day!

Saturday October 8, 1994

Breakfast 8:00 - 9:00 A.M.

Worship 9:00 - 9:45 A.M.

9:50 - 10:30 A.M.
Jesus Role In The
Liberation Of Women

Break - 10 Minutes

10:40 - 11:45 A.M.
The Call To Be An Inclusive Church
Galatians 3:28-28

11:25 - 12:00 Noon
Post Test

12:00 Noon
Lunch

Registration

Name_____

Address_____

State_____

Phone #_____

Position In The Church_____

_____

Single_____Married_____

Age_____

Special Gifts or Talents

_____

_____

_____

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